



THE CAMP SYSTEM:

A Primary Source Supplement Based on Documents from the International Tracing Service

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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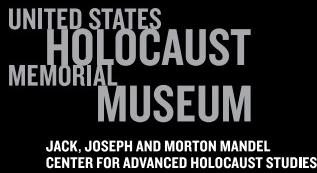
Cover photo: Double row of electrified barbed wire fences at Auschwitz. An electrified barbed wire perimeter was a common feature in many Nazi camps. At Auschwitz, such fences were also used to segregate inmate populations and to separate the camp complex's numerous subdivisions, which included three large main camps and more than 40 smaller subcamps. Like many sites throughout the Nazi camp network, Auschwitz was simultaneously a detention center and a forced labor camp; it also operated as a killing center. First established at pre-existing Polish army barracks in spring 1940, the *Stammlager* (main camp, or Auschwitz I) was continuously expanded by the exploitation of inmates' forced labor. Approximately 1.3 million people of all ethnicities, nationalities, and religions were deported to Auschwitz from across Nazi-occupied Europe, and nearly 1 million Jews were killed there. Able-bodied inmates were selected from arriving transports by SS doctors, while those deemed incapable of performing hard labor were sent directly to the gas chambers. Like most other camps throughout Nazi-occupied Europe, civilian companies like I.G. Farben were heavily involved in the operation of the industrial labor camps at Auschwitz, such as the synthetic rubber factory at Auschwitz-Monowitz (Auschwitz III). Over a million people were murdered at Auschwitz in the few years of its operation. The camp complex was liberated on January 27, 1945 by Soviet forces driving westward into Germany.

Photo credit: Wiener Library.

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AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF THE AUSCHWITZ CAMP COMPLEX TAKEN IN SPRING OR SUMMER 1944

This image of just a portion of the facilities of Auschwitz-Monowitz, one of the three main camps in the Auschwitz network, reveals the extensiveness of the larger camp complex. Allied reconnaissance aircraft under the command of the United States Army Air Force (USAAF) flew several missions over Auschwitz between April 1944 and January 1945 in order to plan bombing raids and assess their effectiveness. Decades after the war, these photographs ignited a controversial debate concerning whether or not the Allies could and should have attempted to destroy or impede the machinery of mass destruction by aerial bombardment of the killing centers or of the railway lines used to transport people to them. As hundreds of thousands of Hungarian Jews were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau in the summer and fall of 1944, Jewish organizations and the War Refugee Board forwarded to the United States War Department several requests to bomb Auschwitz, which had come into the bombing range of USAAF in July. Although bombing raids on the industrial facilities of Auschwitz-Monowitz (above) were conducted, USAAF made no attempt to obstruct the industrialized mass murder taking place in the camp network. The War Department cited several reasons for this decision, including the alleged diversion of necessary forces and the inherent danger to the inmate population.

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.

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WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE (ITS)?

The Allied powers established the International Tracing Service (ITS) after World War II to help reunite families separated during the war and to trace missing family members. Millions of pages of captured documentation have been repurposed for tracing, and the ITS has continued to grow as new records, both originals and copies, have been deposited there. For decades, the ITS strove not only to clarify the fates of victims of the Nazis but also to provide survivors and victims' families with the documentation necessary for indemnification claims. In November 2007, the holdings were made accessible to the public. Since then, the ITS has developed into an archive and documentation center, while tracing remains an important task. Digital copies of most parts of the ITS archives are currently also available in Brussels, Jerusalem, London, Luxembourg, Paris, Warsaw, and Washington, DC.

USING THE ITS ARCHIVE TO RESEARCH THE CAMP SYSTEM

Much of the ITS holdings relating to the concentration camp system comprise materials collected by the Allied liberating forces as they came across the administrative files of Nazi camps and other offices at the end of World War II. This section of the archive is in certain ways quite comprehensive for concentration camps in Germany and Austria in particular, but it is by no means complete. The ITS archive does not hold all documentation for any particular camp and certainly does not hold records from every camp. Items it does contain include: lists that illuminate labor assignments and production statistics; lists of camp populations and their changes due to arrivals, transfers to other camps, deaths, and other factors; camp prisoner registration records; camp infirmary records; and unclaimed prisoner effects. The ITS indexed such items relating to individuals for tracing purposes, rendering them digitally searchable by name and birthdate only.

The Allies also found and collected camp correspondence and reports, which until recently were organized simply as *Sachdokumente* (miscellaneous historical documents) in the ITS collections. The ITS placed millions of these pages in folders specific to the relevant camps but with no further indexing or arrangement. For decades, the *Sachdokumente* remained unavailable to researchers for any kind of systematic work, but digitization has opened new potential for research beyond the collections' original intended tracing function. A keyword search now reads scans of the documents' digitized text, associated archival descriptions, and metadata to facilitate the perusal within these "miscellaneous" folders.

The Camp System demonstrates how the ITS Digital Archive acts with the characteristics of both a digital and a typical historical archive simultaneously. Different approaches ranging from modern electronic searches to a traditional file-by-file, page-by-page examination can benefit research on a specific topic or location. Utilizing a keyword search to locate an archival subsection relating to a camp can help to identify files and documents that are then best approached by surveying the results as one would in a paper archive.

Identifying relevant prisoner registration cards (such as those included as Document 3 in this supplement) requires a more traditional archival approach of sifting through material that was arranged with the purpose of tracing in mind. To find specific kinds of prisoners (other than those imprisoned for reasons of religion, which is often indexed), one must manually search each file to locate the desired records. Correspondence and reports related to a specific concentration camp, such as Document 1, can be found among the "miscellaneous historical documents" with a combination of a digital keyword search (in this example, "regulations") followed by an examination of each identified match. In this case, this combined approach yielded the discovery of a complete set of regulations for the Buchenwald *Schreibstube* (camp registration office) written in 1941. A simple digital keyword search for the term *Selbstmord* (suicide), a commonly listed cause of death in concentration camps (accurate or not) would produce Document 6 among a list of matches. These examples pertain to the identification of records highlighted within this supplement, but other search techniques exist to find other subject-specific documents related to topics other than the camp system.

With the regular and rapid advance of technology, accessibility of the materials held within the ITS Digital Archive also improves. This will continue, but the nature of the collection is such that approaching it as one might in both a digital and traditional archive will be helpful. Keeping an open mind and using creative methods — rather than relying on digital methods alone — always benefits research conducted in the ITS archive.

THE CAMP SYSTEM: AN INTRODUCTION

BY GEOFFREY P. MEGARTEE

Editor, *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933-1945*, Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies,
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Shortly after coming to power in 1933, the Nazis began to set up a series of concentration camps across Germany. These were mostly local sites that the SA (Sturmabteilung), SS (Schutzstaffel), and police established on an ad-hoc basis, where they detained and abused real and imagined enemies of the regime. By the end of the year there were over one hundred such camps.

The founding of those early camps marked the beginning of what became perhaps the most pervasive collection of detention sites that any society has ever created. Eventually the early concentration camps would give way to a centralized system under the SS that, by the end of World War II, would number nearly 1,000 camps, including some of the most notorious, such as Auschwitz, Majdanek, Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, and Dachau. In addition, over the course of their twelve years in power, the Nazis would establish a bewildering array of other sites. These included the killing centers Chełmno, Treblinka, Sobibór, and Belżec. Before them came nearly one hundred “euthanasia” centers, where the Germans gassed people with disabilities and congenital diseases, as well as some concentration camp prisoners. Prisoner-of-war (POW) camps proliferated after 1939, and POWs were put to work in every conceivable capacity. More than 30,000 camps for foreign forced laborers existed, in addition to 2,400 special forced labor camps for Jews. The German army also ran so-called field bordellos, in which women were forced into sexual slavery. Some concentration and forced labor camps had similar facilities. There were over one hundred hospital wards for foreign women who had become pregnant while serving as forced laborers: their babies were

either aborted or, if born there, were usually killed after birth. There were camps for Poles whom the Germans wanted to move off their land; camps for children who acted out in school; ghettos to hold Jews; disciplinary camps for German soldiers; police detention and transit camps; “Germanization” camps for kidnapped Polish children; ordinary prisons...the list goes on and on. Not only the SS, but also the armed forces, private industry, and many governmental and quasi-governmental agencies ran their own camp systems. Germany’s allies, satellites, and collaborationist states, from France to Romania and Norway to Italy, added still more. In all, a conservative estimate of the number of camps, ghettos, and other such facilities, one that posits a minimum size and time in existence for each site and that does not count many “benign” sites, far exceeds 45,000 in total.¹

For a totalitarian regime, and particularly for the Nazis, the camp model offered an irresistible opportunity to dominate the population in the name of the governing ideology. With such places, various authorities could not only detain and punish criminals, but control, indoctrinate, and deter political enemies, physically eliminate people whom they considered racial or political threats, shape society, create an enormous pool of labor to support the German war economy, and proclaim their own bureaucratic importance and loyalty. Camps and other detention sites were central to Nazism.²

Within this massive system, an individual prisoner’s fate depended upon overlapping factors. First was his or her individual circumstances: race,

¹To gain a glimpse of the scope of the system, go to <http://www.zwangssarbeit-in-hamburg.de/> and click on “Start”. The text is in German, but that is not important. As you click-and-drag the map, you will see most of the nearly 1,300 camps that existed in the city of Hamburg alone: mostly forced labor camps, POW camps, and concentration camps. Unfortunately, although there are thousands of published works that deal with aspects of the camp system, there is no single-volume study that covers the whole.

²The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is producing the *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933-1945*, which aims to document as many of the individual sites as possible. As of the beginning of 2018, two of the projected seven volumes have been completed and are available for download from the Museum’s website.

nationality, age, skills, and the reason that was given/created for incarceration. The kind of camp, and even the particular camp, to which he or she had been assigned, and the work to be done there, also affected one's experience and mortality. As conditions in the camps changed over time, the time that the prisoner arrived and was incarcerated in a particular place affected his or her fate.

The prisoners' backgrounds mirrored the variety of the sites. They came from every country over which the Nazis and their allies held power, and they wound up in the camps for any number of reasons. The Nazis persecuted many different groups, from a variety of motivations and to differing degrees. The Jews, of course, were their primary target. The Nazis saw them as a special kind of "racial threat", a parasitic people who had to be dealt with for the good of humanity; after a point in late 1941, this involved physical annihilation. The Germans and their allies concentrated many of the Jews in ghettos and in concentration and forced labor camps, and finally murdered them in a mass, industrialized process unparalleled in history.³ Roma and Sinti were also considered racially "undesirable" by the Nazis, who incarcerated them in camps and ghettos and ultimately targeted them for systematic mass murder. Homosexuals, people with disabilities, and those deemed "Asocial" were also incarcerated simply because of who they were, and many died. Others wound up in camps because of what they did, or were suspected of doing: this included common criminals, political opponents, resistance fighters,

rule-breakers, and enemy soldiers. Millions more entered the system simply because the Germans needed them to work, or because they lived on land that the "master race" wanted for itself. All that the many kinds of prisoners actually had in common was that they were held against their will, to their detriment, and for the benefit of the perpetrators.

The Nazi concepts of race were a key component in shaping a prisoner's experience. Nazism posited a racial hierarchy, with the Germans (so-called Aryans) at the top. According to the social Darwinist thinking at the core of Nazism, the races were engaged in a life-or-death struggle, and the better races could only guarantee their survival at the expense of the others. Anything that a supposedly superior race did to an inferior one in an effort to survive was justified. Those considered to be so-called Aryans fared best in the camps, as did those closest to "Aryan" in the Nazis' worldview, such as ordinary German criminals, American or British POWs, or French or Dutch laborers. The worst off, besides Jews, were those of Slavic descent (Slavs) and other so-called *Untermenschen* (sub-humans). Nationality could help or hinder. Poles and Russians were both regarded as Slavs, for example, but the Germans considered Russians a more dangerous influence because they hailed from the Communist USSR. Nearly 60 percent of Soviet prisoners of war died in German hands, from a combination of outright murder, starvation, exhaustion, exposure and disease, whereas non-Jewish Poles fared much better: between two and four percent of them died.⁴

³Note that the Germans murdered about 2.65 million Jews in the gas chambers, out of the overall total of roughly 6 million killed. Others died from shooting, starvation, disease, and abuse.

⁴Rüdiger Overmans provides information on the fates of prisoners of war from the various countries that fought against Germany in "German Policy on Prisoners of War, 1939 to 1945," in *Germany and the Second World War*, vol. IX/2 (Oxford University Press, 2014).

A prisoner's individual circumstances determined, to a large extent, the camp or camps (most went to more than one) to which he or she was sent. The nature of a particular camp, in turn, could mean a better existence, a worse one – or none at all. The range of possible experiences was remarkably wide, and differences existed not only between types of camp but often between camps of the same type. Being sent to the worst of the POW camps, for example, could be a far harsher fate than being sent to some of the concentration camps.

In most camps, the prisoners' lives centered on work, which was a central element in the Nazis' camp regimen. For those few prisoners the regime sought to rehabilitate, work was the stated means to that end, especially early on – although in reality, many prisoners had to perform work intended only to humiliate, debase, or even kill. Millions of others had to work simply because the Germans needed the work to be done; by the end of the war, a huge proportion of German war industry, as well as ordinary businesses, farms, and government institutions, depended upon forced or prisoner labor.⁵ By late 1944, one could hardly turn a corner in Germany without running into someone the Nazis were holding against her or his will.

Working conditions varied with the workplaces. If a prisoner had a particular skill – as did chemists, electricians, machinists, typists, or those with needed language skills — or was lucky enough to have been trained in simple assembly work, he or she might get an assignment that avoided the worst hazards, even as a concentration camp prisoner. Other prisoners were put to work on farms or in small

businesses, where life could be bearable. But many others (especially those in concentration or penal camps) often had to do heavy manual labor or other dangerous work that could lead to death in short order, either through accident or incapacity; the Germans often killed concentration camp prisoners who became too weak to work.

Likewise, other aspects of prisoners' lives varied from camp to camp. Many camps imposed a militaristic system in the most petty and cruel sense, which included roll calls, uniforms of one kind or another, and a strict hierarchy within both the guard and prisoner populations. Discipline was usually harsh, often arbitrary, and sometimes fatal. Especially late in the war, food was often inadequate in both quantity and quality, as was health care. At all times the prisoners were aware that their status did not approach that of the "master race" and that their lives were subject to the whims of their tormentors. The inmates' responses to these conditions usually fell within a predictable pattern. Some few became collaborators, a mass in the middle usually just tried to get by, and others resisted through sabotage, underground agitation, escape attempts, or even revolt.

The universe of camps, ghettos, and other sites of detention, persecution, forced labor, and murder touched every corner of society in Germany, in states aligned with Germany, and in the occupied territories. Knowing about that universe tells us a great deal about the Nazi system and its victims.

⁵ Hitler's Foreign Workers: Enforced Foreign Labor in Germany Under the Third Reich, by Ulrich Herbert (translated by William Templer; Cambridge University Press, 1997, based upon a 1985 original) provides a good, if somewhat dated, overview. More recent work, such as that by Mark Spoerer, is only available in German.

LIST OF SYMBOLS USED TO IDENTIFY INMATES

This reference sheet was originally created for the use of the *Schreibstube* (registration office) at Buchenwald in 1941. Revealing the hierarchical categorizations of Nazi racial thinking as well as the euphemisms commonly given to justify the persecution of different groups, this list provided camp authorities with many possible ways to classify and label inmates. Such markings, usually consisting of inverted triangles colored to identify the reasons given for an individual's incarceration, were used on camp documents and sewn onto prisoners' camp uniforms. Categorizations were often merged by combining symbols. For example, a Jew arrested for political reasons might be made to wear a red triangle superimposed on a yellow one. For non-German nationals, a letter denoting their country of origin was placed within the triangle, such as a "P" for Polish prisoners. The classifications inmates received could greatly affect their chances of survival. Hierarchical symbols of categorization such as these were imposed on camp inmates throughout Nazi-occupied Europe.



Prisoner markings, Buchenwald Schreibstube, 1.1.5.0/82066189/ITS Digital Archive.

LIST OF SYMBOLS USED TO IDENTIFY INMATES

TRANSLATION

Attachment 6

29

Prisoner Markings

	Political Prisoner		Pole Political		Political Jew
	Career Criminal		Pole Career Criminal		Career Criminal Jew
	Emigrant [non-Jewish Germans who had emigrated but returned to Germany]		Czech Political		Emigrant Jew
	Homosexual		Career Criminal "K"-Prisoner ["K" stood for Krieg (war) profiteering; usually black-market or hoarding activities]		Homosexual Jew
	Jehovah's Witness		Dutchman		Jehovah's Witness Jew
	Work-shy		Belgian		Work-shy Jew
	Unfit for military service Action 1.9.1939		Spanish		Race defiler Jew
	Unfit for military service Action 1.9.1939		French		Pole Jew
	Political recidivist		Basic Race defiler [non-Jewish German]		Recidivist Political Jew

LIST OF SYMBOLS USED TO IDENTIFY INMATES

SUGGESTED APPROACHES TO THIS DOCUMENT

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

- Consider some of the ways Nazi authorities classified, divided, and segregated camp inmates. Are any of the specified inmate groups surprising? Do any conflict with your understanding of Nazi ideology?
- Why do you think that one third of this list of symbols was used to designate different Jewish inmates? Why might Jews have been subject to more exacting differentiation than other prisoners?
- What reasons did Nazi law provide for incarcerating individuals who received these specific prisoner designations? Why might these classifications have been separated from other categories, and what could this reveal about Nazi ideology?
- Roma and Sinti prisoners, commonly referred to disparagingly as “Zigeuner” (“Gypsies”), are not identified by a specific symbol on this list. What might this suggest about this particular category of prisoner? What might it suggest about Nazi policies regarding Roma and Sinti when this list of possible prisoner identification symbols was created?
- What effects might classification as a member of a certain group have on an individual’s experience as a camp inmate? How might a particular classification affect a person’s chances of survival?

FURTHER RESEARCH TOPICS RELATED TO THIS DOCUMENT:

- Nazi social and racial ideologies
- The Buchenwald camp system
- Experiences of inmates within the Nazi camp system
- The methods of division and segregation used to splinter and divide inmate populations
- The longer history of using badges to identify Jews



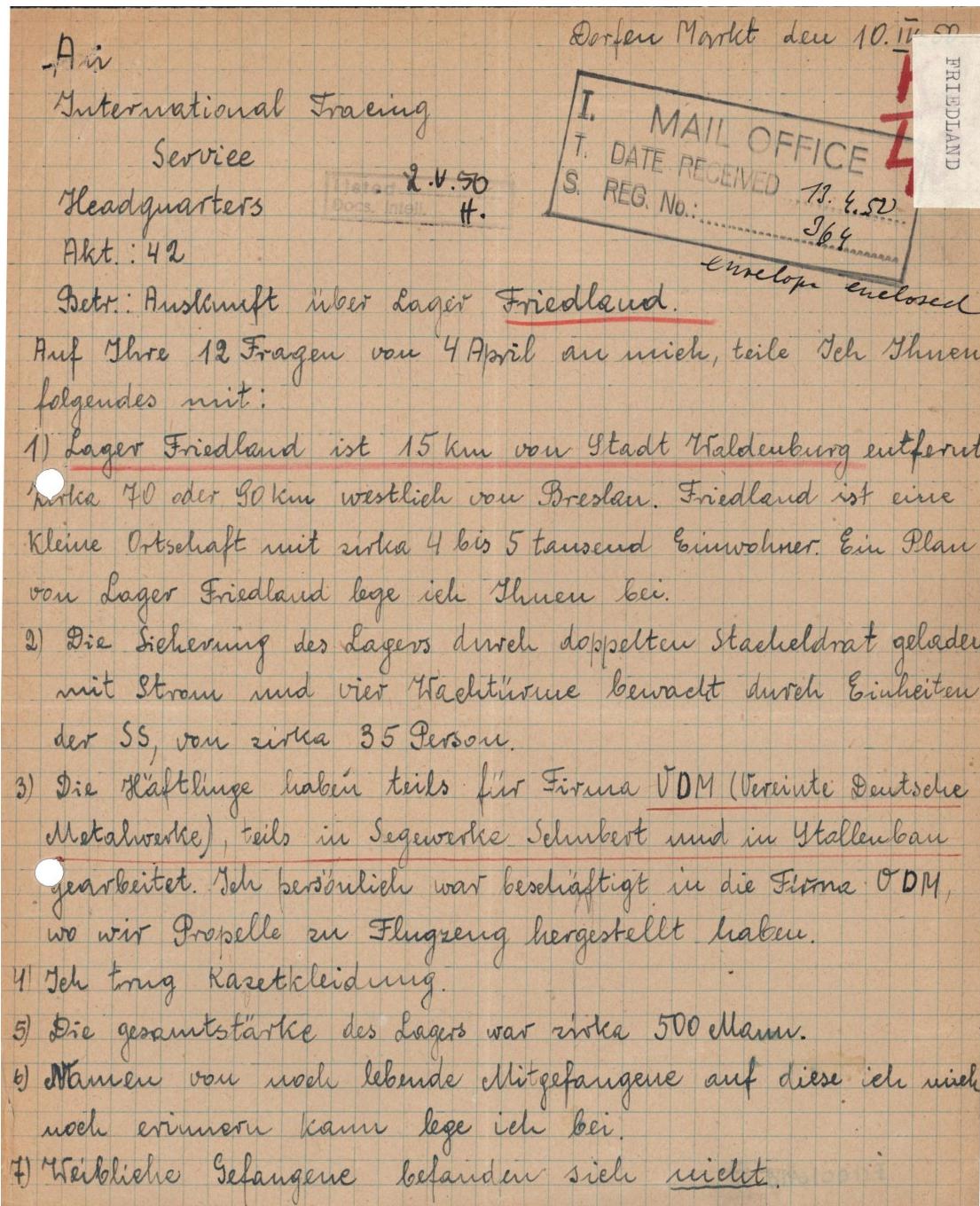
IDENTIFICATION BADGES WORN BY CAMP INMATES AND FORCED LABORERS.

The different symbols used by Nazi authorities to identify camp inmates and forced laborers as members of specific groups were stamped onto identification cards and made into badges sewn prominently onto inmates' clothing. Visible signs of classification within the camp hierarchy divided inmates from one another and made their "crimes" easily recognizable by Nazi personnel. Triangles of varying colors often signified such classifications, and two badges could be combined if a prisoner met more than one qualification for incarceration. For example, a simple purple triangle indicated a person had been imprisoned simply for being a Jehovah's Witness, while camp authorities identified Polish inmates arrested for political reasons with a red triangle assigned to political prisoners marked specially with a "P" that denoted the individual's Polish nationality. Foreign forced laborers euphemistically called *Ostarbeiter* (literally, "eastern workers") wore rectangular badges with the abbreviation "OST." *Ostarbeiter* were often recruited under coercive conditions from the occupied territories of the Soviet Union and transported into the Reich for forced labor, and these badges made them instantly recognizable to the German civilian population among whom they worked.

Image credits (clockwise from left): Purple triangle prisoner badges worn by Jehovah's Witnesses Albert Jahndorf (prisoner number 46436, imprisoned in Sachsenhausen) and Luise Jahndorf (prisoner number 1989, imprisoned in Ravensbrück), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Annemarie & Waltraud Kuesserow; "OST" badge worn by *Ostarbeiterin* Anna Kopilex, 1.2.9.5/108021618/ITS Digital Archive; red triangle badge with "P" worn by Polish political prisoner Jadwiga Dzido in the Ravensbrück concentration camp, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Anna Hassa Jarosky and Peter Hassa.

2 POSTWAR TESTIMONY ABOUT THE GROSS-ROSEN SUBCAMP AT FRIEDLAND pg. I

The following letter by Josef Kreuzer is one of many similar such responses found in the ITS archive. Survivors who wrote to ITS in the years after the war to substantiate their persecution often received questionnaires asking for further information in order to establish documentation of their incarceration and to create a record of the Nazi camp system. As such, these constitute an early form of Holocaust survivor testimony and often reveal information about less-known sites of Nazi persecution. Kreuzer's letter and the hand-drawn map he attached describe details of the Gross-Rosen subcamp of Friedland, where the Germans made inmates work for civilian armaments companies. Gross-Rosen became the center of a sprawling complex of nearly a hundred subcamps like Friedland. Kreuzer and approximately 300 other Polish Jews had been transferred from the Łódź ghetto to Auschwitz before being sent to open the subcamp at Friedland in September 1944. The camp was liberated in May 1945.



2 POSTWAR TESTIMONY ABOUT THE GROSS-ROSEN SUBCAMP AT FRIEDLAND pg. 2

- 8) Als wir ins Lager eingeliefert wurden war niemand dort, es war am 9 September. Das Lager haben wir verlassen am 9 Mai.
- 9) Das Lager wurde nicht evakuiert.
- 10) Das Lager wurde am 9 Mai um 11 Uhr Mittag von den Russen befreit.
- 11) Das Lager gehörte zu Konzentrationslager Gross-Rosen.
- 12) Wir haben das Lager eröffnet mit 300 Mann, dann wurde zu uns 150 Mann, Ungarn, Griechen und Tschechen ausgesiedelt. Dann wurde noch einmal 50 tschechische Jude zu uns gesandt. Im Januar 1945 wurde in unser Lager 200 fast halbtote Häftlinge eingesetzt. In eine Woche sind fast alle von die 200 vor erschöpfung gestorben. Die oben genannten waren evakuierte Häftlinge anderer Lager, die durch Friedland vorbei gegangen sind.
Sollten Sie noch Auskunft von mir brauchen, stelle ich immer gerne zur Verfügung.

Hochachtungsvoll
Josef Kremer
Dorfen-Markt 06.
Hrt. Markt 99.

Friedland

2 POSTWAR TESTIMONY ABOUT THE GROSS-ROSEN SUBCAMP AT FRIEDLAND pg. 3

Namen von lebende Mitgefangene auf diese ich mich
noch erinnern kann von Lager Friedland.

Herschko Szwarc Lagerälteste I
Goldner " " II

Subochinski Blockälteste

Lerer Leon Friseur

Rubinowicz David

Stern Berek Blockälteste

Goldstein Josef Schef Koch

Stern Abram Blockälteste

Jakubowicz Sina

Jakubowicz Abram

Drigalski Henryk

Grybman Abram

" " Fajwel

Herszkowicz 2 Brüder

Libicki Eliel

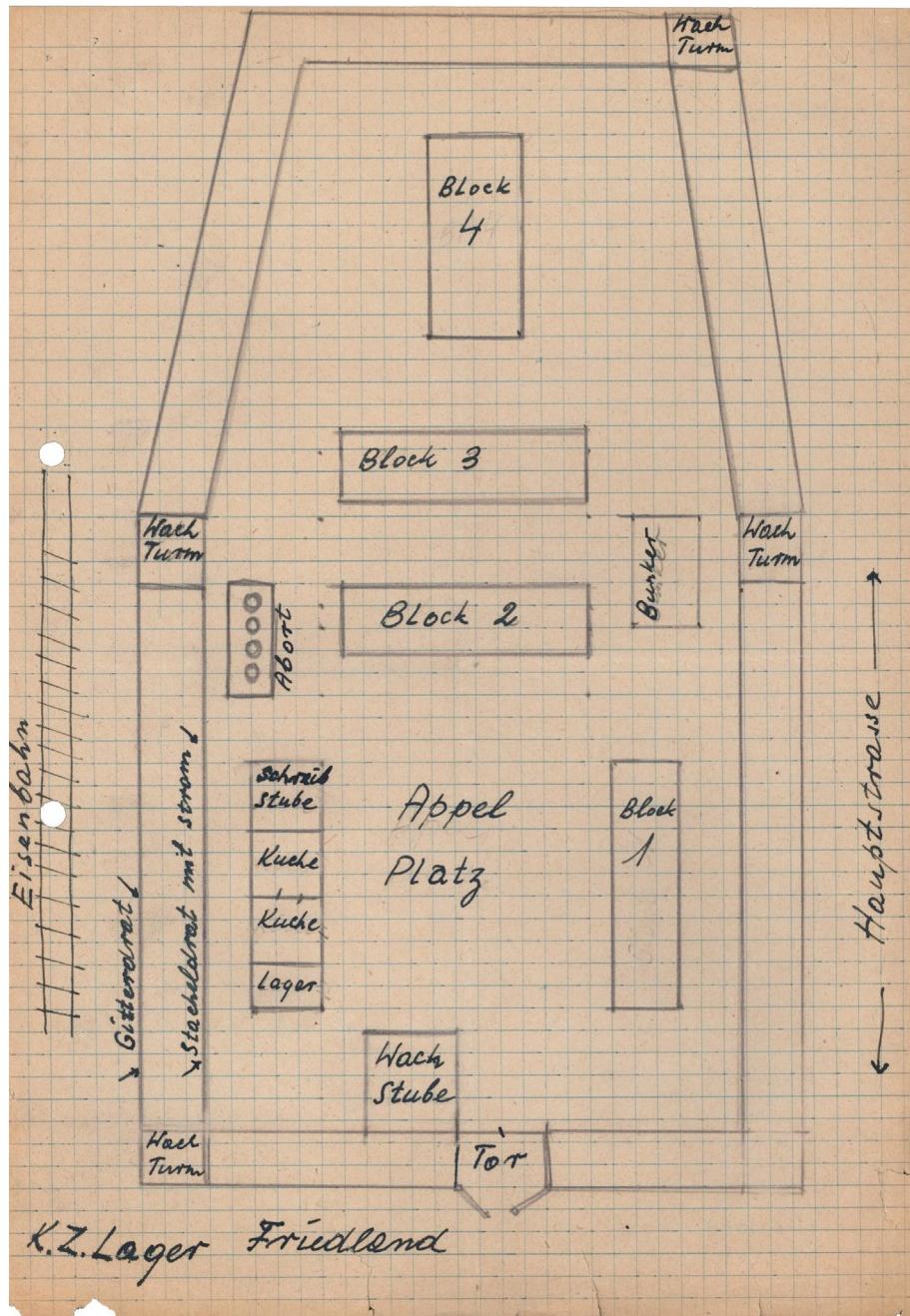
Libicki Abram

Sukka Telik und Bruder

Rubinowicz Fadewor

Rajchman Jakob

2 POSTWAR TESTIMONY ABOUT THE GROSS-ROSEN SUBCAMP AT FRIEDLAND pg. 4



POSTWAR TESTIMONY ABOUT THE GROSS-ROSEN SUBCAMP AT FRIEDLAND

TRANSLATION pg.1

Dorfen Markt, April 10, [1950]

-To

International Tracing
Service

2 May 1950

Headquarters H.

Reference number: 42

Subject: Information about Camp Friedland

Of your 12 questions on April 4, I can share the following:

- 1) Camp Friedland is 15 kilometers from the city of Waldenburg, some 70 or 90 kilometers west of Breslau. Friedland is a small village with around 4 to 5 thousand residents. A map of camp Friedland is attached for your information.
- 2) The camp is secured by two electrified barbed wire fences and four watchtowers guarded by the SS, about 35 people.
- 3) The inmates worked partly for the company VDM (Vereinte Deutsche Metalwerke [sic; United German Metal Works]), partly at the Schubert Segewerke [sic; sawmills], and in tunnel construction. I personally worked at VDM, where we manufactured plane propellers.
- 4) I wore a camp uniform.
- 5) The total population of the camp was about 500 men.
- 6) I have attached the names of those I was imprisoned with who are still living and that I can remember.
- 7) There were no female prisoners to be found [in this camp].

POSTWAR TESTIMONY ABOUT THE GROSS-ROSEN SUBCAMP AT FRIEDLAND

TRANSLATION pg. 2

- 8) When we were brought to the camp, there was no one there, it was September 9. We left the camp on May 9.
- 9) The camp was not evacuated.
- 10) The camp was liberated by the Russians on May 9 at 11:00 am.
- 11) The camp was attached to the Gross-Rosen concentration camp.
- 12) Our 300 men opened the camp, and then 150 men, Hungarians, Greeks, and Czechs were sent to us. Then another 50 Czech Jews were sent to us. In January 1945, 200 nearly half dead prisoners arrived in our camp. Almost all of the 200 died of exhaustion within a week. The above-mentioned were evacuated prisoners from other camps who had passed through Friedland.

If you should need further information, I am always available.

Sincerely,
Josef Kreuzer
Dorfen-Markt Obb.
Unt. Markt 99.

Friedland

POSTWAR TESTIMONY ABOUT THE GROSS-ROSEN SUBCAMP AT FRIEDLAND

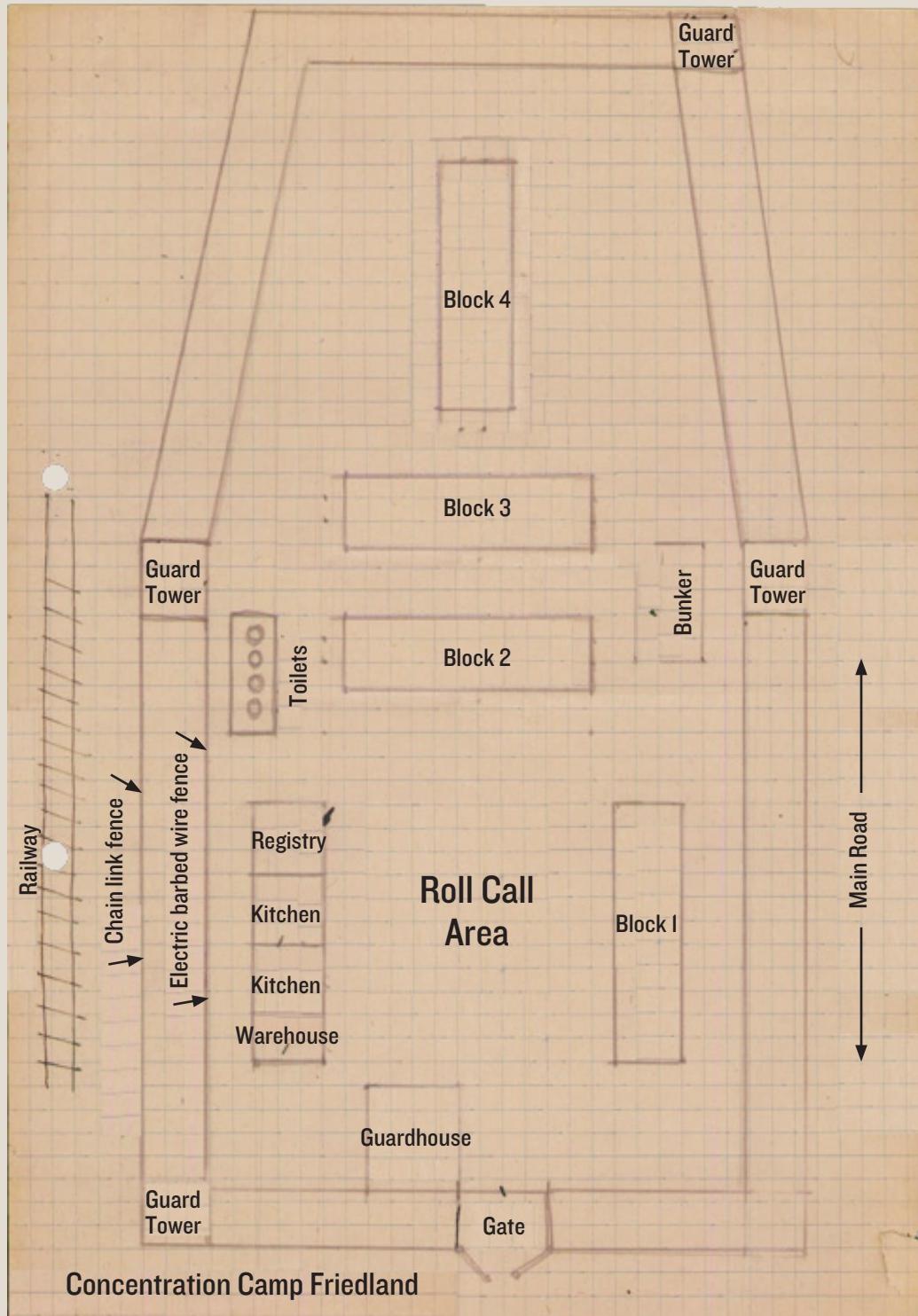
TRANSLATION pg.3

Names of surviving inmates that I can remember from Camp Friedland.

Herschkorn Ignatz	Senior camp prisoner I
Goldner	" " II
Lubochinski	Senior block prisoner
Lerer Leon	Barber
Rubinowicz Dawid	
Stern Berek	Senior block prisoner
Goldstein Josef	Head cook
Stern Abram	Senior block prisoner
Jakubowicz Sina	
Jakubowicz Abram	
Dziganski Henryk	
Grynbaum Abram	
" " Fajwel	
Hershkowicz 2 brothers	
Libicki Mietek	
Libicki Abram	
Lubka Felek and brother	
Rubinowicz Tadeusz	
Rajchman Jakob	

POSTWAR TESTIMONY ABOUT THE GROSS-ROSEN SUBCAMP AT FRIEDLAND

TRANSLATION pg. 4



POSTWAR TESTIMONY ABOUT THE GROSS-ROSEN SUBCAMP AT FRIEDLAND

SUGGESTED APPROACHES TO THIS DOCUMENT

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

- What can we learn about the different groups of people interned at Friedland from Kreuzer's description?
- What type of work did Kreuzer perform, and for whom? What does this suggest about the relationship between the camp system, forced labor, civilian business, and the war effort?
- What does Kreuzer write about male and female inmates in his letter? Why might this be so?
- What was the guard-to-inmate ratio in the camp? Does the map help us understand how this could have been the case?
- Although the camp at Friedland was not evacuated, Kreuzer describes the arrival of other prisoners from camps evacuated by the SS as Soviet forces approached. What does his description reveal about these evacuations?

FURTHER RESEARCH TOPICS RELATED TO THIS DOCUMENT:

- The Gross-Rosen camp system
- Forced labor under the Third Reich
- The so-called death marches from camps in the closing months of the war
- Inmate labor in German war industries



A PRISONER ROLL CALL AT MELK CONCENTRATION CAMP IN AUSTRIA.

After the *Anschluss* (the annexation of Austria into Nazi Germany) in spring 1938, Nazi officials transferred prisoners from Dachau to begin construction of the Mauthausen camp in the vicinity of a stone quarry. Melk was one of nearly 50 subcamps in the surrounding areas of the Mauthausen main camp. The *Appelplatz* (roll call area) was a common feature within the camp network, and SS guards were known to force inmates to stand in place in the open roll call area of camps for hours in poor weather as punishment for the most minor transgressions. The commandant of Melk, Julius Ludolf, was an alcoholic with a reputation for being especially sadistic and violent. He was known to brutally beat camp inmates and to steal food and cigarettes from his own guards. Ludolf served as commandant of Melk until the camp was evacuated in April 1945. He was captured by US troops the following month, tried for his crimes, and hanged in May 1947.

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.

3 PRISONER REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS pg. I

CARD FOR RAYMOND DECLERQ. Geoffrey De Clercq (registered as Raymond Declercq) was arrested in October 1943, but the Nazi regime began detaining alleged political subversives and establishing concentration camps within Germany almost immediately after Hitler's appointment as chancellor in January 1933. Individuals interned on political charges comprised the vast majority of camp inmates until 1938. The German security police in Paris arrested De Clercq and sent him to Buchenwald during *Aktion Meerschaum* (Operation Seafoam). This was a series of roundups in German-occupied Western Europe that targeted members of the resistance. De Clercq was incarcerated and attached to a work commando at a satellite camp of Buchenwald until the camp's liberation in April 1945. Living in Paris after the war, De Clercq helped to organize annual reunions of his fellow survivors and arranged pilgrimages to the site of their persecution under the Third Reich.

<i>Weimar-Buchenwald</i>		<i>Meerschaum</i>	<i>Lagerstufe:</i>	<i>Häftl.-Nr.:</i>
				<i>F</i>
Häftlings-Personal-Karte				
Fam.-Name:	Declercq	Überstellt	Personen-Beschreibung:	
Vorname:	Raymond	am:	an KL.	Grösse: 179 cm
Geb. am:	31.5.21 in: Poitiers	am:	an KL.	Gestalt: schlank
Stand:	ledig Kinder: keine	am:	an KL.	Gesicht: oval
Wohnort:	Poitiers, 15 Rue des Ecossais,	am:	an KL.	Augen: grau
Strasse:	Dép. Vienne.	am:	an KL.	Nase: wellig
Religion:	r.kath. Staatsang.: Frankreich	am:	an KL.	Mund: wulstig
Wohnort d. Angehörigen:	Mutter: Solange D., Poitiers,	am:	an KL.	Ohren: abstehend
	W.O.	am:	an KL.	Zähne: vollständig
Eingewiesen am:	30.10.1943	am:	an KL.	Haare: kastan.
durch:	B.D.I.-Paris	am:	an KL.	Sprache: franz., spanisch,
in KL.:	Buchenwald	am:	an KL.	englisch
Grund:	Polit. Franzose	Entlassung:	Bes. Kennzeichen:	
Vorstrafen:	keine	am:	durch KL.:	Charakt.-Eigenschaften:
mit Verfügung v.:				
Strafen im Lager:				
Grund:	Art:			
Sicherheit b. Einsatz:				
Körperliche Verfassung: keine				
I.I.S. FOTO No. 1637A				
20580/S				
KL./54.43 - 50000				
 11143222				

In the upper right-hand corner of De Clercq's registration card, the symbol used by camp authorities to identify French political prisoners appears as a red triangle with "F" printed in its center. De Clercq's classification as a French political prisoner is also reflected in the information printed in the left-hand column: *Grund: Polit. Franzose* (Reason: Political French). Identification cards often included much personal information about individual inmates. For example, under the category *Personen-Beschreibung* (personal description) on the right, camp authorities noted that De Clercq spoke French, Spanish, and English. Many standard physical descriptors such as *Grösse* (height), *Augen* (eyes), and *Haare* (hair) also appear under this category. Some cards included photographs as well.

Buchenwald prisoner card, Raymond Declercq, 1.1.5.3/5732914/ITS Digital Archive.

3 PRISONER REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS pg. 2

CARD FOR ÁBRAHÁM PASZTERNÁK. Born in Bethlen, Hungary (Transsylvania) in 1924, Ábrahám Paszternák was one of six children in a religious, Yiddish-speaking family. Between mid-May and early July 1944, Hungarian and German authorities organized the deportation of nearly 440,000 Hungarian Jews from their homes. In May 1944, Paszternák and his family were rounded up by Hungarian gendarmes, herded into an open-air ghetto, and then deported by train to Auschwitz-Birkenau. He and two of his brothers survived the so-called selection process, and Paszternák was sent for slave labor to Buchenwald, to a work commando in a brick yard, and then to Schlieben (a satellite camp of Buchenwald). From there he was taken to Theresienstadt. After liberation, he briefly returned to Hungary, and then emigrated to the United States. Ábrahám Paszternák died in Detroit in June 2017.

5063

<u>KL.: Weimar-Buchenwald</u>	<u>Jude</u>	<u>Hellerith erjap!</u>	
		<u>Häftl.-Nr.:</u> <u>57.929 U</u>	
Häftlings-Personal-Karte			
Paszternák			
Fam.-Name:	Ábrahám	Überstellt	Personen-Beschreibung:
Vorname:	Bethlen	am: 6.6.44	Grösse: 175 cm
Geb. am:	3.3.24	Buchenwald	Gestalt: mittelst.
Stand:	Ied.	an KL.	Gesicht: oval
Wohnort:	Bethlen, Kom. Szolnok Doboka,	am:	Augen: blau
Strasse:	Zenesz 624	an KL.	Nase: gerade
Religion:	mos. Staatsang.: Ungarn	am:	Mund: gew.
Wohnort d. Angehörigen:	Bruder: Mendel F., 132 KME, Szkotoroszka,	am:	Ohren: labateh.
UP Valuc, Kom. Bereg	am:	an KL.	Zähne: 2 fehlen
Eingewiesen am:	30.5.44	am:	Haare: rötlich
durch:		am:	Sprache: jidisch, ungar., rumän., deutsch, ital.
in KL.:	Auschwitz	am:	Bes. Kennzeichen: -
Grund:	Polit. Ungar-Jude	Entlassung:	Charakt.-Eigenschaften: -
Vorstrafen:	-	am: durch KL.:	
mit Verfügung v.:			
Strafen im Lager:			
Grund:	Art:		
KL./5/XI. 43-500000		U.76441363	
		12352	

Paszternák's registration card reveals how arbitrary and specious the categories for the classification and identification of inmates could be. For example, although Paszternák and his family were arrested and deported from Hungary because they were Jews, a triangle with a "U" for *Ungar* (Hungarian) appears on the upper right-hand corner of his card. Additionally, although Paszternák and his family were persecuted simply for being Jewish, the reason (*Grund*) given for his arrest in the left-hand column indicates that he was arrested because he was a Jewish-Hungarian political offender (*Grund: Polit. Ungar-Jude*). Elsewhere, camp authorities emphasized his Jewish heritage and religion. The single word *Jüde* [sic] is typed across the top of the card, and in the left-hand column Paszternák's religion is listed as *mos.*, which is an abbreviation of the German adjective *mosaisch* (commonly used at the time to refer to Judaism).

Buchenwald prisoner card, Ábrahám Paszternák, 1.1.5.3/6781448/ITS Digital Archive.

3 PRISONER REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS pg. 3

CARD FOR ELLA TAUBE. In December 1937, SS chief and Chief of German Police Heinrich Himmler issued a decree enabling the German Criminal Police (*Kriminalpolizei*, or Kripo) to arrest and detain individuals suspected of engaging in “asocial” behavior (*Asoziale*). Alcoholics, homosexuals, and Roma and Sinti were all targeted under this order, as were many individuals accused of being “work-shy” (*Arbeitsscheue*). Nazi authorities persecuted many members of their own self-imagined *Volksgemeinschaft* (German racial community) through this decree. Ella Taube, for example, was a Catholic German citizen born in Hamburg. She was arrested by the Kripo in Danzig and admitted to the Stutthof concentration camp as “asocial” in 1942 before being transferred to Ravensbrück in March 1943.

Kommandantur des Konzentrationslagers Stutthof Politische Abteilung		Beschreibung	
Familienname:	T a u b e, geb. Gurski	Größe:	165
Vorname:	E l l a	Gestalt:	gedrungen
geb. am:	13.4.11 in: Hamburg	Gesicht:	oval
Wohnort:	H a m b u r g	Augen:	graublau
Straße:	Geritzstr. 19 b/ Lerenzen	Nase:	breit
Beruf:	K ö c h i n	Mund:	geschlossen
Religion:	kath.	Ohren:	anliegend
Ehefrau:	verwitwet	Zähne:	lückenhaft
Vater:	Paul Gurski	Haare:	blond
Kinder oder Verwandte:	Wohnort: Danzig-Laumental, Glossittenweg 35	Bart:	./.
		Sprache:	Deutsch u. Spanisch
Bewegungs-Schuhhaft angeordnet am: durch: Kripo Danzig		eingeliefert am: 14. 5. 42	
Grund:		entlassen am:	
Vorstrafen:	keine	Vfz.:	
Bisherige Parteizugehörigkeit:	keine	vom:	
Ich bin darauf hingewiesen, daß meine Bektafung wegen intellektueller Untundensfälschung erfolgt, wenn sich die vorstehenden Angaben über meine Person als falsch erweisen sollten.			
Lichtbild	(Unterschrift)		
Wiederbeschaffung: XX, Danzig	J. A. der Leitung der Politischen Abteilung		

Although the documentary evidence on Taube is scant, some details of her life and her experiences can be gleaned from the clues on her sparsely printed registration card. A comparison of her birth date listed on the upper left (*geb. am 13.4.11 in: Hamburg*) and her camp admission date on the bottom right (*eingeliefert am: 14.5.42*) suggests that Taube was 31 years old when she was admitted to the Stutthoff concentration camp. She was listed as a Catholic (*Religion: kath.*) who lived in Hamburg (*Wohnort: Hamburg*) and worked as a cook (*Beruf: Köchin*). Her father reportedly lived in Danzig (Gdańsk), which is where she was arrested by the Kripo. Her card suggests that she had been married but was a widow at the time of her incarceration (*Ehefrau: verwitwet*).

Stutthoff prisoner card, Ella Taube, 1.1.41.2/4662359/ITS Digital Archive.

3 PRISONER REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS pg. 4

CARD FOR ERNA ARNDT. Convicted of black market activities multiple times before being arrested by the Kripo in April 1944 and classified as a *Berufsverbrecher* (career criminal), Erna Arndt was initially admitted to Ravensbrück before being sent to Buchenwald as a forced laborer. In March 1945, she was transferred to Bergen Belsen, where a large women's camp had recently been established for female prisoners evacuated from other concentration camps threatened by advancing Allied forces. Bergen Belsen's rapidly growing inmate population caused intense overcrowding and created miserable conditions. Disease, malnutrition, neglect, and the brutality of the camp guards caused tens of thousands of prisoner deaths in the months before British forces liberated the camp in April 1945. Although her mother tried to locate her after the war, no traces of Erna Arndt could be found after her transfer to Bergen Belsen.

258 | *Ravensbrück* 36.006 28735

Häflerith erfaßt

Häftlings-Personal-Karte

KL.:	Häfl.-Nr.:
	
Fam.-Name: Arndt Oberstellt _____ Vorname: Erna geb. Barnefsky am: 31.8.44 an KL. Geb. am: 19.12.10 am: Sabrow / Pomm. <i>Buchenwald</i> Stand: Arbeiterin Kinder: 1 am: _____ an KL. Wohnort: Berl.-Neuköln am: _____ an KL. Strasse: Donaustr. 2 am: _____ an KL. Religion: ev. Staatsang.: R.D. Wohnort d. Angehörigen: Eltern <i>Friedr. Barnefsky</i> <i>Berl.-Neuköln, Donaustr. 2</i> Eingewiesen am: 9.6.44 Entlassung: _____ durch: Krimpol Berlin C.2 am: _____ durch KL. in KL.: Ravensbr. Grund: B.V. <i>Berufsverbrecherin</i> Vorstrafen: _____ mit Verfügung v.: _____	
Personen-Beschreibung: Größe: 155 cm Gestalt: schlank Gesicht: oval Augen: blau-grau Nase: mittel, sattel Mund: mittel, voll Ohren: oval Zähne: lückenh. Haare: dkbl. braun Sprache: deutsch	
Bes. Kennzeichen: _____ Charakt.-Eigenschaften: _____	
Sicherheit b. Einsatz: _____	
Körperliche Verfassung: _____	
I.T.S. FOTO No. 11	

KL. 5/6.44 - 500 000

Camp authorities used the green triangle that appears in the upper right-hand corner of Arndt's card to identify criminal offenders. In the left-hand column, the reason (*Grund*) for Arndt's incarceration echoes this designation (*Grund: B.V. Berufsverbrecherin*). This classification could confer a more privileged status on inmates than designations based on Nazi racial thinking, and *Berufsverbrecher* sometimes became kapos or *Blockälteste* (prisoner overseers or senior block prisoners). Seniority at a camp could also affect individuals' status within the camp hierarchy and their chances of survival. Arndt, however, had been living in Berlin until her arrest (*Wohnort: Berl.-Neuköln* [sic]) and was only admitted into the camp system in June 1944 (*Eingewiesen am: 9.6.44*).

Ravensbrück prisoner card, Erna Arndt (from Buchenwald prisoner file), 1.1.5.3/7514292/ITS Digital Archive.

3 PRISONER REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS pg. 5

PERSONAL INFORMATION SHEET FOR ERNST PACK. After serving with distinction in World War I, Ernst Pack returned home to the German city of Iserlohn to run his family's construction business. Pack had no criminal record until 1938, when he was apprehended for engaging in a consensual sexual encounter with another man and became one of approximately 100,000 German men arrested for violating the national law prohibiting homosexual acts between men (the law did not apply to women). Nazi ideology held that homosexual behavior was a degenerate vice that threatened the reproductive potential of the so-called Aryan race. Pack was arrested for a similar offense in 1943, at which time he was sentenced to ten months in prison. Ultimately, more than 53,000 men were convicted for such offenses, and at least 5,000 German men accused of homosexuality were incarcerated within the camp network. More than half of these men did not survive their incarceration.

Konzentrationslager Natzweiler		<i>Art der Haft: § 175</i>	Gef. Nr.: 6761
Name und Vorname:	P a c k E r n s t		
geb.:	3.3.95.	zu:	Letmathe Kreis Iserlohn
Wohnort:	S o l l i n g e n		
Beruf:	K a u f m a n n		
Staatsangehörigkeit:	D . R .		
Name der Eltern:		beide verst. Karl Pack (Bruder)	
Wohnort:	S o l l i n g e n , Ritterstr. 69		
Name der Ehefrau:	-----		
Wohnort:	-----		
Kinder:	----- Alleiniger Ernährer der Familie oder der Eltern:		
Vorbildung:	4 . V s . 6 J . Realg .		
Militärdienstzeit:	1914 bis 1918 Ullanen. von — bis		
Kriegsdienstzeit:	---		
Größe:	180	Nase:	dick
Mund:	breit	Bart:	----
Sprache:	Deutsch, franz, engl.		
Haare:	schwarz		
Gesicht:	rund		
Augen:	braun		
Ohren:	g. abst.		
Zähne:	voll.		
Ansteckende Krankheit oder Gebrechen:	-----		
Besondere Kennzeichen:	-----		
Rentenempfänger:	-----		
Verhaftet am:	13.11.42.	wo:	E s s e n
1. Mal eingeliefert:	22.12.43.	2. Mal eingeliefert:	23.12.43 K L N a
Einweisende Dienststelle:	K r i p o E s s e n		
Grund:	H o m o s e x u e l l e r		
Parteizugehörigkeit:	----- von — bis		
Welche Funktionen:	-----		
Mitglied v. Unterorganisationen:	-----		
Kriminelle Vorstrafen:	2 X mal		
Politische Vorstrafen:	-----		
Ich bin darauf hingewiesen worden, dass meine Bestrafung wegen intellektueller Urkundenfälschung erfolgt, wenn sich die obigen Angaben als falsch erweisen sollten.			
v. g. u.	Der Lagerkommandant		
<i>[Signature]</i>			
I.T.S. FOTO No. 8 N P			
KL/42/443 500.000			

The reason for Pack's incarceration appears at the top of the sheet (*Art der Haft: § 175*). Paragraph 175 was a national legal statute that had prohibited "unnatural indecency" among men since German unification in 1871. Nazi authorities applied this law more aggressively during the Third Reich, and revisions to Paragraph 175 made in 1935 left the definition of "indecency" purposefully vague, granting the state unprecedented legal authority to arrest and convict targeted individuals. Prisoners convicted under Paragraph 175 could sometimes choose to undergo sterilization or castration in exchange for their freedom (later policies enabled camp authorities to order castration or sterilization without inmates' consent). The Nazi version of Paragraph 175 remained in effect in East Germany until 1950 and in West Germany until 1969, resulting in the arrest of over 100,000 gay men in the postwar period. Gay survivors struggled to receive official recognition or compensation for their suffering.

Natzweiler personal information sheet, Ernst Pack (from Flossenbürg prisoner file), 1.1.8.3/10965475/ITS Digital Archive.

3 PRISONER REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS pg. 6

CARD FOR JOSEFA BAMBERGER. At the outbreak of the Second World War, approximately 30,000 Roma and Sinti (often pejoratively referred to collectively as “*Zigeuner*,” or “Gypsies”) lived in Greater Germany. Viewed by Nazi authorities as both racial outsiders and social parasites, Roma often faced persecution based on perceptions of their supposedly nomadic lifestyles and physical appearances (Roma who worked as craftsmen or performers frequently traveled in order to ply their trades). This was the justification the Kripo used to arrest and detain Josefa Bamberger, who was still just a teenager when she was interned in Auschwitz in 1943. The following spring she was transferred briefly to Ravensbrück before being moved to camps at Schlieben, Altenburg, and Meerane. Finally, Bamberger was liberated in April 1945. Although many Roma faced difficulties obtaining documentation of their persecution, Bamberger’s request for certification of her incarceration was granted in May 1950.

<i>400</i>		<i>KL.: Auschwitz II.</i>	<i>28337</i>	<i>Häftl.-Nr.: 2678</i>
Häftlings-Personal-Karte				
Fam.-Name:	B a m b e r g e r	Überstellt	Personen-Beschreibung:	
Vorname:	Josefa	am: 19.4.44	Grösse:	1.48 cm
Geb. am:	?? 27. in: Schwichteler	Ravensbrück	Gestalt:	schlank
Stand:	Kinder:	am: 31.8.44	Gesicht:	breit
Wohnort:	Hannover-Buechholz	Buchenwald	Augen:	dkl' braun
Strasse:		am:	Nase:	sattel
Religion:	kath. Staatsang.: DR.	am:	Mund:	grosse, voll
Wohnort d. Angehörigen:	Eltern: Josef u. Maria B.	am:	Ohren:	gross, durchl. lückenh.
Eingewiesen am:		am:	Zähne:	Haare: schwarz, geschor.
durch:	Kripo Kassel	am:	Sprache:	zigeuner, deutsch
in KL.:	Auscha.	am:	Bes. Kennzeichen:	Tätowierung: Arm lks.; Narben: Ohrläppchen lks.
Grund:	asoz. Arb.-Zig-in	Entlassung:	Charakt.-Eigenschaften:
Vorstrafen:		am:	Sicherheit b. Einsatz:
Strafen im Lager:				
Grund:	Art:	Bemerkung:	Körperliche Verfassung:	
.....	ITS. FOTO No. 25	
KL./5/4.43 - 50000				

Romani prisoners were often categorized as “*Asoziale*.” The black triangle on the upper right-hand corner of the card was used by camp authorities to identify these inmates. Bamberger’s registration card, however, suggests that she was targeted specifically for her Romani heritage. The reasons given for her incarceration on the left-hand side of the card (*Grund*: asoz. *Arb.-Zig-in*) are abbreviations for the classification “asocial, work-shy Gypsy” (*asoziale Arbeitscheue-Zigeunerin*), and the right-hand column of personal description (*Personen-Beschreibung*) reveals that she spoke both Romanes and German (*Sprache*: *zigeuner., deutsch*). Authorities described Josefa as short (*Grösse*: 1.48 cm) and slender (*Gestalt*: *schlank*) with a wide face (*Gesicht*: *breit*) and dark brown eyes (*Augen*: *dkl'braun*). Her card describes shorn black hair (*Haare*: *Schwarz, geschor.*), an identifying tattoo on her left arm, and scars on her left earlobe (*Tätowierung*: *Arm lks.; Narben: Ohrläppchen lks.*).

Auschwitz II prisoner card, Josefa Bamberger (from Buchenwald prisoner file), 1.1.5.4/7516730/ITS Digital Archive.

3 PRISONER REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS pg. 7

CARD FOR MARIA POMASKA. Only fourteen years of age when she was first arrested as a Polish political prisoner, Maria Pomaska was deported to Auschwitz with her mother, Janina, in early September 1944. They were transferred briefly to Ravensbrück before being transferred to Buchenwald as forced laborers the day after Maria's fifteenth birthday in October 1944. When advancing United States forces approached the camp in April 1945, the women were part of a work commando in a satellite camp of Buchenwald at Meuselwitz, and camp authorities evacuated them to the interior of the Reich along with several thousand other prisoners from these subcamps. The terrible conditions of such forced marches and the vicious treatment from the guards caused the deaths of unknown thousands of prisoners. Maria Pomaska, however, managed to stay with her mother and survived the brutal march from Meuselwitz.

KL.: Weimar - Buchenwald		MÄHL-Nr.:
		34.453
Häftlings-Personal-Karte		
Fam.-Name: <u>Pomaska</u>	Überstellt	Personen-Beschreibung:
Vorname: <u>Maria, Irena</u>	am: <u>18.9.44</u> an KL. <u>Ravensbrück</u>	Größe: <u>156</u> cm
Geb. am: <u>28.10.29</u> ; Warschau	am: <u>29.10.44</u> an KL. <u>Buchenwald</u>	Gestalt: <u>schl.</u>
Stand: <u>led.</u> Kinder: <u>-</u>	am: _____ an KL.	Gesicht: <u>rund</u>
Wohnort: <u>Warschau</u>	am: _____ an KL.	Augen: <u>grün</u>
Strasse: <u>Stare Miasto 2</u>	am: _____ an KL.	Nase: <u>kurz</u>
Religion: <u>r.k. Staatsang. Polin</u>	am: _____ an KL.	Mund: <u>norm.</u>
Wehnort d. Angehörigen: Vater: <u>Józef P.</u>	am: _____ an KL.	Ohren: <u>norm.</u>
W.O.	am: _____ an KL.	Zähne: <u>vollst.</u>
Eingewiesen am: <u>4.9.44</u>	am: _____ an KL.	Haare: <u>bl.</u>
durch: _____	Entlassung:	Sprache: <u>poln.</u>
im KL.: <u>Auschwitz</u>	am: _____ durch KL.: _____	Bes. Kennzeichen: <u>keine</u>
Grund: <u>Polit. Polin</u>	mit Verfügung v.: _____	Charakt.-Eigenschaften: _____
Vorstrafen: <u>keine</u>		Sicherheit b. Einsatz: _____
Strafen im Lager:		
Grund: _____	Art: <u>Mutter: Janina g.</u>	Bemerkung: _____
Vater: W.O. _____	Luszczynska w. Ehm.	
KL.Bu. 44-800022		
I.T.S.FOTO No. 18981		
Körperliche Verfassung: _____		
1981		

In the camp system of Nazi Germany, a person's ability to work often meant the difference between life and death, and authorities determined individuals' potential for forced labor from their age and physical appearance. Elderly people's and children's inability to work doomed them at so-called selections. Maria Pomaska's prisoner card suggested authorities considered her healthy and capable of performing work: she was described as having "normal" ears (*Obren: norm.*), a complete set of teeth (*Zähne: vollst.*), and no scars or other special distinguishing marks (*Bes. Kennzeichen: keine*).

Buchenwald prisoner card, Maria Pomaska, 1.1.5.4/7684402/ITS Digital Archive.

PRISONER REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS

SUGGESTED APPROACHES TO THESE DOCUMENTS

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

- How are the racial policies and prejudices of the Nazi regime reflected on these prisoner registration documents?
- Why might camp authorities have kept such detailed records on prisoners?
- What can be inferred about Nazi ideologies and practices from the different reasons given for the incarceration of these individuals?
- Does any of the information included on the cards seem especially interesting or noteworthy? Why might some details have been included and others omitted?

FURTHER RESEARCH TOPICS RELATED TO THESE DOCUMENTS:

- Nazi racial policies and Nazi practices of categorization and classification
- The exploitation of camp inmates' forced labor
- Nazi persecution of Jews, Roma and Sinti, Poles, homosexuals, political opponents, and other targeted groups
- The development and expansion of the camp system in Germany and throughout occupied Europe



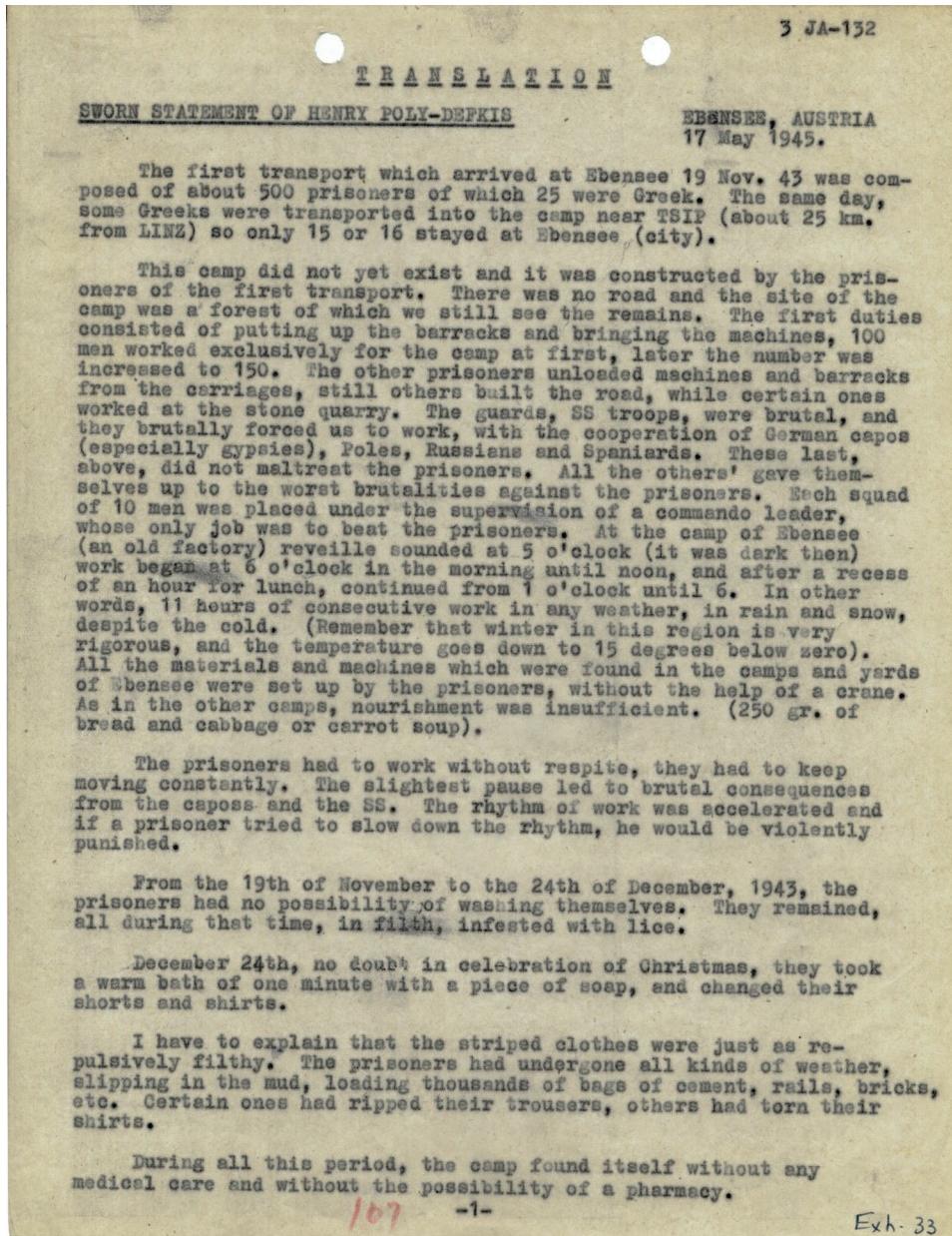
INMATES FROM BUCHENWALD MARCHING PAST CIVILIAN HOMES ON THEIR WAY

TO DACHAU ON APRIL 26, 1945. Maria Seidenberger was not yet 18 years old when she secretly took this picture from the second-story window of her family's home in the pastoral outskirts of Munich near the concentration camp at Dachau. Her photograph shows inmates being marched on foot by SS guards to Dachau from Buchenwald, which had been liberated two weeks earlier. These so-called death marches occurred all over Nazi-occupied Europe as Allied forces approached concentration camps, labor camps, and killing centers. Inmates were evacuated to the center of the Reich on forced marches under horrible conditions that caused thousands of deaths. German civilian populations that were not situated in close proximity to a camp but happened to lie in the path of these mass movements were exposed to large numbers of inmates in desperate and dying conditions. The closeness of the Seidenberger home to Dachau and the family's anti-Nazi politics led young Maria to commit many acts of covert, non-violent resistance. In addition to the clandestine photographs she took, Maria developed images taken secretly by a Czech inmate named Karel Kasak; hid photographs, papers, and human remains; and mailed letters to family members of inmates. Later in her life, Maria could still recall how she and her mother wept together in their kitchen as they heard the gunfire from the execution of thousands of Soviet POWs coming from a nearby field.

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Maria Seidenberger.

4 POSTWAR TESTIMONY ON THE MAUTHAUSEN SUBCAMP AT EBENSEE pg. I

This testimony was given by camp survivor Henry Poly-Defkis less than two weeks after the liberation of the Mauthausen subcamp at Ebensee, Austria by the 80th Infantry Division of the US Army in early May 1945. His statement describes many details about the miserable and deadly living and working conditions prisoners faced at Ebensee, where thousands died from abuse, maltreatment, and starvation as they labored to construct the camp itself and an elaborate tunnel system for an underground rocket factory in the nearby mountains.



4 POSTWAR TESTIMONY ON THE MAUTHAUSEN SUBCAMP AT EBENSEE pg. 2

Fifteen or twenty dead had been transported to Mauthausen as well as 50 or 60 half dead. To be considered sick, it was necessary for a prisoners to be in a condition which did not let him march by the proper means. The bosses and SS particularly looked after this type of prisoner by blows on the neck.

December 24 1944, (1943??) a doctor was sent through Mauthausen. (a doctor prisoner to be sure). He had neither facilities nor medicine.

January 7, 1944, three barracks were put up and prepared in the camp (which has been liberated by the 3rd U. S. Army). About 500 prisoners were brought there. The dead and the sick having been reinforced by others brought from Mauthausen. 500 other prisoners arriving from Mauthausen were put up in the old factory.

January 17, 1944, the 500 prisoners came to live in the camp, where the new barracks had been prepared. All the prisoners worked at the stone quarries (Steinbruch) all day (11 hours), at night they had to work again from 6 to 8 in the camp for its enlargement. I repeat, rain, snow, cold, nothing stopped the accelerated pace of the work.

In February, 350 prisoners, mostly Italians, were brought into the camp. From this time to June 1944, the effective strength of the camp was raised to 8,000 prisoners. The number of deaths in this period was raised to 800 or 1000 men a month. The hangings succeeded hangings. Many prisoners were hanged for no known reason. Ten or fifteen in the wood and numbers on the assembly area.

From 24 December 1943 to June 1944, the prisoners had neither changed their linen nor taken a bath. The lice were counted by the million and to such a point that the Commandant of Mauthausen sent a squad of specialists who disinfected the camp.

The cruellest atrocities were committed by the different capos and block-chiefs on the person of the prisoners by orders of the SS. The different SS block leaders persecuted the prisoners. It was only toward the last that certain soldiers showed good will toward the prisoners, but it was very rare.

The civilians who directed the different jobs where the prisoners worked, proved almost as brutal as the SS. They were seen beating the prisoners with shovel handles. Neither the SS nor the civilians took into account that the insufficient nourishment of the prisoners and this bad treatment did not permit them to furnish the energy to the work as he intended. It was the methodical extermination in the most brutal and cruel manner all inspired by the SS leaders.

Each day the commandos of Steinbruch brought back the skeleton-like bodies of the prisoners whom they had worn out with their sadistic cruelty. The prisoners died of hunger. They picked up bones and gnawed them like famished beasts--They were alas! really starved. They picked up with their spoons some drops of soup which were spilled from the bottles (? bouteillons). I have seen prisoners pick up in the toilet some rotten potato parings. I have been told that a prisoner had cut the buttock off a sick man to eat it. (That happened in the last days of April). The SS looked on and enjoyed all these sufferings. 108 -2-

4 POSTWAR TESTIMONY ON THE MAUTHAUSEN SUBCAMP AT EBENSEE pg. 3

At the infirmary, it was hell within hell! At first, before a prisoner was admitted to the doctor, he had to pass through a series of formalities as ridiculous as they were useless. The sick prisoner from his return of commando (?) had to be registered for the medical visit by the clerk (? servain) of his block. (These clerks had orders from the SS Commandant to avoid sending the sick ones to the infirmary without a really grave cause). Following the good or bad disposition of the clerk of the block, the prisoner received, or not, the authorization to go to sick call.

All the prisoners of a combined block had to go together to the infirmary. There were, at the last, 28 blocks. Each block had a minimum of 10 sick or prisoners to receive medical care. Nearly 300 sick, then, presented themselves for the inspections. They were made to wait for hours in the court before being admitted into the consultation hall.

The personnel of the infirmary were terrorized by the SS., and they neglected the sick with cowardice. Certain doctors and male nurses brutally maltreated the sick. To admit a patient, he had to be half-dying. It was orders from the SS Commandant - He had to have at least 4 degrees of temperature. In a word, only the dying could cross the threshold of the infirmary and be admitted for somedays. Evidently if the doctors wanted to be so bold, they had the facility of saving the prisoner who would be brought back dead from the commando the next day. The SS of the infirmary maltreated and did violence to the sick, who found themselves 4 in a bed. No care of the sick, almost no treatment.

The sickman, 80 times out of 100 was condemned to death. For about 19 months, the camp of Ebensee was the tomb of about 20,000 prisoners.

The first Commandant of Ebensee, I forget his name, one day when he pretended to be drunk, machine-gunned a commando (?) which was returning from work and killed about 30 prisoners.

This is a short story of the Camp of Ebensee, macabre remains of the Hitler epoch....

/s/ HENRY POLY-DEFKIS
alias Louis Henry Sampaix
108 Solones St. Athens
40 St. Sophie St. Thessalonika
111 Paradise St. Marseille
of the National Committee of Greek Prisoners

I, T-5 JACK R. NOWITZ, being first duly sworn, state that the foregoing is a true and correct translation of the sworn statement of HENRY POLY-DEFKIS given at EBENSEE, AUSTRIA on 17 May 1945, made to the best of my ability.

T/5 Jack R. Nowitz, JA Sec.
Hq. Third US Army

SUBSCRIBED AND SWEARN TO BEFORE ME AT EBENSEE, AUSTRIA THIS 17TH DAY
OF MAY 1945.

109 -3-

EUGENE S. COHEN, Maj. QM Corps
Investigating Officer

POSTWAR TESTIMONY ON THE MAUTHAUSEN SUBCAMP AT EBENSEE

SUGGESTED APPROACHES TO THIS DOCUMENT

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

- What does this testimony reveal about prisoners' living and working conditions at Ebensee?
- What was the nature of the medical care available to camp inmates?
- Why might Poly-Defkis have remembered so many specific details about bathing in the camp?
- What might be inferred from this testimony concerning civilian populations' knowledge of the camp system and the involvement of the populace in the exploitation of inmates' forced labor?
- How does Poly-Defkis describe different camp authorities' treatment of the prisoners?

FURTHER RESEARCH TOPICS RELATED TO THIS DOCUMENT:

- The Mauthausen camp system
- The integration of camp inmates' forced labor into civilian economies and societies
- The exploitation of forced labor in industries of war
- The Nazi practice of using fellow inmates (known as senior block prisoners, or kapos) as disciplinary authority figures



INMATES MARCHING TO FORCED LABOR FROM AUSCHWITZ-MONOWITZ. This photograph was taken by an unknown guard sometime between 1942 and 1944 and given to survivor Nina Schuldenrein. The inmates are being marched from their barracks at Auschwitz-Monowitz (Auschwitz III) to their daily forced labor at the synthetic rubber (Buna) plant operated by the civilian chemical company I.G. Farben. The company invested hundreds of millions of Reichsmarks into the construction of the factory and the camp complex built to house the inmates forced to work there. Enticed by the prospect of cheap and readily available labor, civilian companies often became closely involved in the exploitation of forced labor and the administration of subcamps throughout Nazi-occupied Europe. I.G. Farben constructed the plant at Auschwitz in 1942 precisely to benefit from inmates' forced labor. The company also became notorious for providing camp authorities with the large amounts of Zyklon-B used in the gas chambers of Auschwitz, and after the war thirteen executives of I.G. Farben were sentenced to prison for their participation in the crimes of the Third Reich.

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Joe Schuldenrein.

5 INVOICE FOR FORCED LABOR PRESENTED TO BERNSDORF & CO. pg. I

The Bernsdorf & Co. munitions factory in Dresden received this invoice for the use of forced labor in February 1945. Such firms often worked closely with Nazi authorities to exploit the labor of camp inmates, who often lived and worked in miserable conditions. The 500 Jewish men, women, and children who labored at Bernsdorf & Co. in Dresden were housed in makeshift quarters on the top floors of a cigarette factory that was struck during the Allied bombing of Dresden in February 1945.

89

Flossenbürg 1. März 1945
den

Kommandantur-Arbeitseinsatz
Dienststelle

Forderungsnachweis Nr. Flo. 927

über den Häftlingseinsatz

bei Fa. Bernsdorf & Co., Zweigwerk Dresden
für die Zeit vom 1. bis 28. Februar 1945

Gemäß umseitiger Aufstellung sind zu entrichten:

weiblich	für	Facharbeiter (Tagesbeschäftigung)	à RM = RM
	für	Facharbeiter (Halbtagsbeschäftigt.)	à RM = RM
	für	3183 Hilfsarbeiter (Tagesbeschäftigung)	à RM 4,- = RM 12 732,-
	für	Hilfsarbeiter (Halbtagsbeschäftigt.)	à RM = RM
			Summe: RM 12 732,-

Der Betrag von RM 12 732,- ist bis 1. sofort nach Erhalt 1945 auf das Konto
der Verwaltung des Flossenbürg bei der Reichsbankstelle
Weiden/Obpf.Nr.653/1911 oder auf das Postscheckkonto Nürnberg 48747 zu
(Bankverbindung) überweisen. Die Nummer des Forderungsnachweises ist auf dem betreffenden Bank- bzw. Postabschnitt
unbedingt anzugeben.

Sachlich richtig und festgestellt:
Der Leiter der Verwaltung
[Signature]

H-Hauptsturmführer
(Dienstgrad)

KL 14/9.44 30.000

5 INVOICE FOR FORCED LABOR PRESENTED TO BERNSDORF & CO. pg. 2

641
Übersicht
über die im Monat Februar 1945 abgestellten Häftlinge

Tag	Facharbeiter		Hilfsarbeiter		Insgesamt	Bemerkungen
	Gz. Tag	Hl. Tag	Gz. Tag	Hl. Tag		
1.			-		-	
2.			261		261	
3.			260		260	
4.			261		261	
5.			262		262	
6.			262		262	
7.			-		-	
8.			-		-	
9.			260		260	
10.			250		250	
11.			260		260	
12.			260		260	
13.			255		255	
14.			254		254	
15.			13		13	
16.			13		13	
17.			13		13	
18.			23		23	
19.			23		23	
20.			22		22	
21.			22		22	
22.			31		31	
23.			31		31	
24.			31		31	
25.			31		31	
26.			31		31	
27.			31		31	
28.			31		31	
29.			-		-	
30.			-		-	
31.			-		-	
			3183		3 183	

Für die Richtigkeit der Aufstellung:
Floßenbürg, den 1. März 1945

Der Lagerkommandant:
H-Obersturmbannführer

INVOICE FOR FORCED LABOR PRESENTED TO BERNSDORF & CO.

TRANSLATION pg. I

Flossenbürg, March 1, 1945

Office of the Commandant - Labor Deployment
Office

Invoice Nr. Flo. 927

regarding prisoner labor deployment

at: Fa. Bernsdorf & Co., Dresden Branch

for the time: February 1-28, 1945

According to the attached, the following is to be paid:

	for _____ skilled laborers	(full day)	at RM _____ = RM _____
	for _____ skilled laborers	(half day)	at RM _____ = RM _____
female	for <u>3183</u> unskilled laborers	(full day)	at RM <u>4--</u> = RM <u>12 732,--</u>
	for _____ unskilled laborers	(half day)	at RM _____ = RM _____
			Total: _____ RM <u>12 732,--</u>

The amount of RM 12 732,-- is due immediately upon receipt by transfer to the account of the Administration of Flossenbürg at the Reich Bank Office Weiden/Oberpfalz Nr. 653/1911 or to the postal checking account Nürnberg 48747. The invoice number must be specified to the relevant bank or postal department.

Accurate and confirmed by:

The head of administration



SS-Captain

(Rank)

INVOICE FOR FORCED LABOR PRESENTED TO BERNSDORF & CO.
TRANSLATION pg. 2

Summary

for the month February 1945 temporarily assigned inmates

Day	Skilled laborers		Unskilled laborers		Total	Comments
	Full Day	Half Day	Full Day	Half Day		
1.			-		-	
2.			261		261	
3.			260		260	
4.			261		261	
5.			262		262	
6.			262		262	
7.			-		-	
8.			-		-	
9.			260		260	
10.			250		250	
11.			260		260	
12.			260		260	
13.			255		255	
14.			254		254	
15.			13		13	
16.			13		13	
17.			13		13	
18.			23		23	
19.			23		23	
20.			23		23	
21.			22		22	
22.			22		22	
23.			31		31	
24.			31		31	
25.			31		31	
26.			31		31	
27.			31		31	
28.			31		31	
29.			-		-	
30.			-		-	
31.			-		-	
			3183		3183	

Verification of the above information by:

Flossenbürg, March 1, 1945

Camp Commandant:



SS-First Lieutenant

INVOICE FOR FORCED LABOR PRESENTED TO BERNSDORF & CO.

SUGGESTED APPROACHES TO THIS DOCUMENT

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

- Although there is little narrative in this document, there are many intriguing details. Where and when was this written? How much did each inmate's labor cost the company per day?
- Notice the daily breakdown of individual inmates listed on the second page and any changes to it. What accounts for the drastic decrease in forced laborers in mid-February 1945?
- What does this document reveal or suggest about the relationship between the Nazi camp system, forced labor, and German civilian businesses?
- What can be inferred from the fact that the specific information on this document was filled out on an invoice form prepared for this purpose?

FURTHER RESEARCH TOPICS RELATED TO THIS DOCUMENT:

- Connections between the camp system, forced labor, and civilian businesses
- The German war economy
- The living and working conditions of forced laborers under the Third Reich
- The final months of the war and the invasion of Germany
- The aerial bombardment of Dresden and the policy of targeting urban centers



CLANDESTINE PHOTOGRAPH OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN BOUND FOR RAVENSBRÜCK IN OCTOBER 1944.

This photograph was the first image to appear on a roll of film from a camera used in the Ravensbrück concentration camp by women seeking to document the medical experiments inflicted upon them by camp physicians. The camera was traded for a piece of bread by a woman arriving at the camp on a large transport from Warsaw following the suppression of the Warsaw Uprising by German forces in October 1944. Known as "the Rabbits" because camp physicians experimented on them as if they were laboratory animals, dozens of young Polish women and teenaged girls at Ravensbrück in late 1942 underwent cruel tests, which caused life-long injuries and premature deaths. With the acquisition of the camera, several so-called "Rabbits" secretly photographed images of one another's wounds behind their barracks before discarding the camera and hiding the film as evidence. The film was brought to Paris by a liberated French inmate in April 1945, and the negatives were sent to the surviving "Rabbits" in Poland.

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Anna Hassa Jarosky and Peter Hassa.

6 TRANSLATED LIST OF CAUSES OF INMATE DEATHS

This document is a key that was prepared in June 1945 by the US Army for postwar investigations of crimes committed at the Buchenwald concentration camp. It explains the symbols and abbreviations for the causes of death given on an associated list of deceased Russian POWs. Allied investigators frequently presented Nazi documents (and their translations) as evidence in war crimes investigations, and the ITS holds many such documents. This list is presented here to give the reader a sense of the many ways prisoners perished in Nazi camps, although in most cases Nazi record keepers listed deaths as having been due to tuberculosis or heart attack no matter the actual cause.

2 JA 81
Date typed:
3 June 45
EXHIBIT N-5
cont.

231

K E Y
To the Symbols of the Cause of the Death

Symbol	German Term	Translation
A	Auf der Flucht erschossen	shot while trying to escape
B	Herzschwäche	weakness of heart
BB	Akute Herzschwäche	acute weakness of heart
C	Herz- und Kreislaufschwäche	weakness of heart and of circulation of the blood
CC	Körper- und Kreislauf-schwäche	weakness of body and of circulation of the blood
D	Lungenentzündung	pneumonia
DD	Bronchopneumonie	bronchopneumonia
E	Ruhr	dysentery
F	Altersschwäche	marasmus (senile decay)
G	Blutvergiftung	blood poisoning
H	Selbstmord	suicide
I	Nierenentzündung	nephritis
J	Tod durch feindlichen Bombenangriff	killed by bombs during an enemy air raid
K	Rippenfellentzündung	pleuritis
L	Grippe	influenza
M	Herzschlag	heart failure
N	Infektiöser Magen- und Darmkatarrh	infectious gastritis and enteritis
O	Lungentuberkulose	tuberculosis of the lungs
P	Zellgewebentzündung	phlegmonia
R	Herzmuskelentartung	myocarditis
S	Lungenoedem	pulmonary oedema
T	Hirnschlag	apoplexy
U	Rose	erysipel
V	Dickdarmentzündung	colitis
W	Akute Dickdarmentzündung	acute colitis
Y	Herzinsuffizienz	insufficiency of the heart
Z	Allgemeine Körperschwäche	general bodily weakness

Pfc Arthur S Lindsay
32412799

Translated list of causes of inmate deaths, 1.1.5.0/82065042/ITS Digital Archive.

TRANSLATED LIST OF CAUSES OF INMATE DEATHS

SUGGESTED APPROACHES TO THIS DOCUMENT

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

- What does this document indicate about the quality of medical care provided to camp inmates?
- What can be inferred from this document about inmates' living conditions?
- Some of the causes of death are medically nonspecific. Identify these and discuss ways in which such terms might have been applied euphemistically.
- Who might have applied these symbols to inmates' documents? Would camp guards, medical professionals, or both have been involved in creating documentation of inmates' deaths?

FURTHER RESEARCH TOPICS RELATED TO THIS DOCUMENT:

- Living conditions within the camp system
- German medical professionals' roles within the camp system
- Inmate escape attempts and other forms of resistance
- Death rates among inmate populations within the camp system



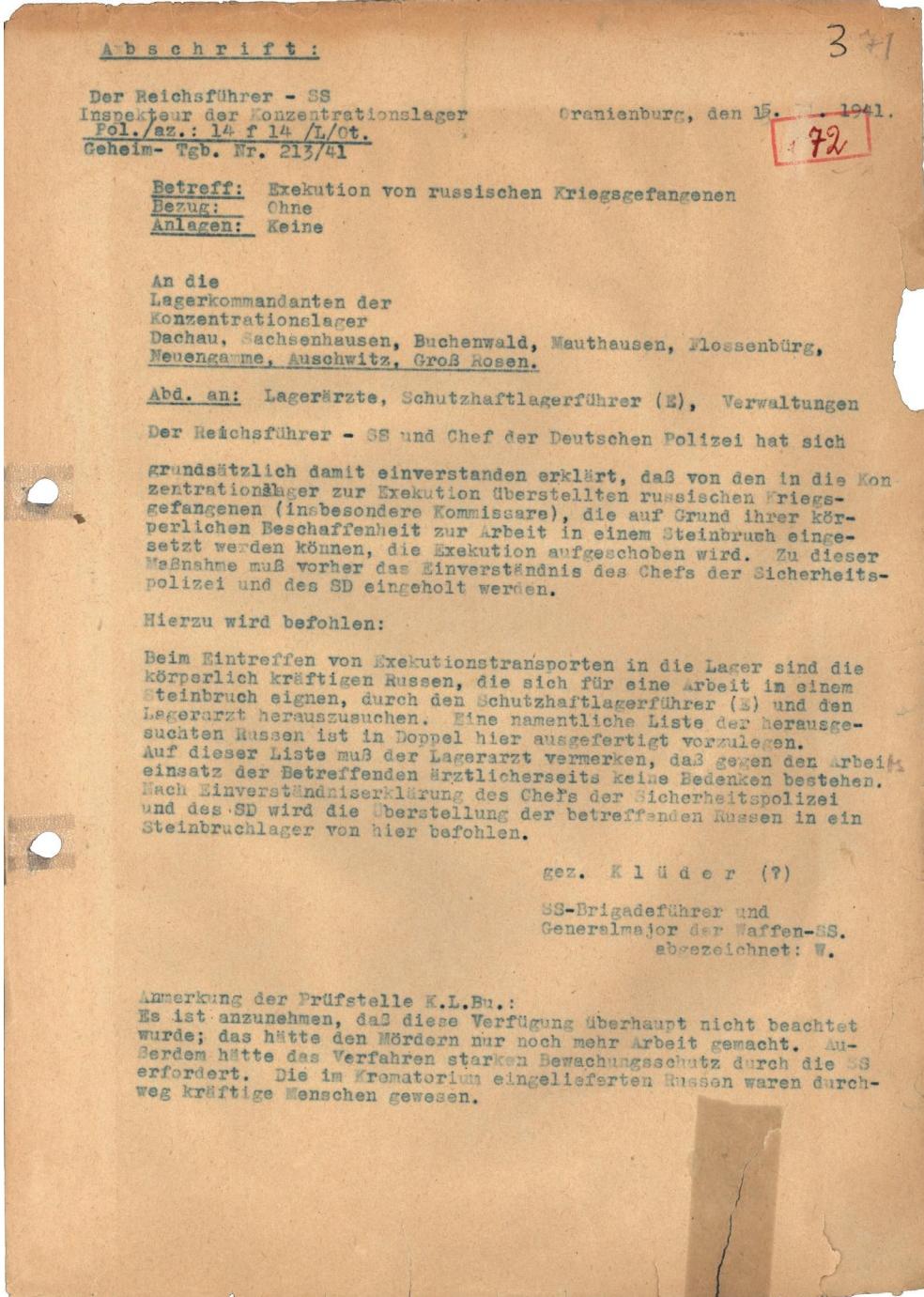
SS OFFICERS GATHERED TO BID FAREWELL TO A PLATOON COMMANDER AT

GROSS-ROSEN IN 1941. Originally established as a subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in 1940, Gross-Rosen became an independent camp at the center of a vast network of approximately one hundred forced labor subcamps in 1941. Inmates were forced to work in a granite quarry owned by the Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke (DESt), an SS-owned company, and in armaments factories operated by German civilian companies such as Krupp, I.G. Farben, and Daimler Benz. The inmate population of the Gross-Rosen camp complex grew to more than 76,000 people before it was evacuated in February 1945. At the time of this picture in 1941, camp officers were gathered to say goodbye to a colleague who had been responsible for the expansion of the camp in 1940. The man with the dog is SS Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Roedl, the commandant of Gross-Rosen. Roedl and his officers posed for several such photographs together, demonstrating the camaraderie they enjoyed with one another even amidst the sufferings of the camp complex they administered.

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Martin Mansson.

7 ORDER REGARDING SOVIET PRISONERS OF WAR

This order to concentration camp commandants was originally written in November 1941, several months after the invasion of the Soviet Union, when many Soviet prisoners-of-war had been captured. It relates a policy change designed to exploit the captured soldiers for their labor. This transcription and an English translation were prepared for the US Army in the course of its postwar investigations of activities at the Buchenwald concentration camp. Both documents include an added notation that indicates its review by a board of former prisoners who conveyed opinions and impressions of the evidence for analysis in the larger investigations.



ORDER REGARDING SOVIET PRISONERS OF WAR

TRANSLATION

Transcription/Duplicate:

Reich Commander - SS
Inspector of Concentration Camps
November 1941
Pol. / file no.: 14 f 14 /L/Ot.
Confidential journal entry no. 213/41

Oranienburg, 15

Subject: Execution of Russian Prisoners of War
Reference: None
Attachments: None

To the
Camp Commandants of the
Concentration Camps
Dachau, Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald, Mauthausen, Flossenbürg,
Neuengamme, Auschwitz, Groß Rosen.

Abd. to: Camp doctors, POW camp commandants (E), Administration

The Reich Commander - SS and Chief of the German Police have agreed that Russian POWs (especially high level officers) who have been transferred to concentration camps for execution but whose physical condition permits them to work in the stone quarry shall have their executions postponed for this reason.
Approval for these measures must be obtained in advance from the head of the Security Police and the SD [Security Service].

It is hereby ordered:

Upon the arrival in camps of transports of prisoners for execution, the physically strong Russians, who are suitable for work in a quarry, are to be selected by the commandant of the POW camp (E) and the camp doctor. A list of the selected Russians should be submitted in duplicate. The doctor must note on the list that there are no medical concerns contradicting assignment for labor. After the consent of the head of the security police and the SD, the transfer of Russian POWs to the quarry camp will be ordered.

Signed: Klüder (?)

SS-Major General and
Major General of the Waffen-SS.
Signed: W.

Note from the inspection authority of the Buchenwald concentration camp:
It is to be assumed that this order was not observed at all; it would have only made more work for the murderers. Moreover this procedure would have required a higher level of oversight by the SS. The Russians who were sent to the crematorium were always able-bodied men.

ORDER REGARDING SOVIET PRISONERS OF WAR

SUGGESTED APPROACHES TO THIS DOCUMENT

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

- What is the subject of this order, and to whom was it addressed?
- When was this memorandum written and in what context? In what stage was the war at the time?
- What might be inferred from the details in this document concerning the development and planning of Nazi occupation policies?
- What role does this order assign to camp doctors? What does this suggest about the role of the medical profession within the camp system?

FURTHER RESEARCH TOPICS RELATED TO THIS DOCUMENT:

- The Nazi occupation of the territories of the Soviet Union
- Nazi policies regarding the treatment of Soviet soldiers, officers, and political commissars
- The conflicts and tensions between Nazi policies of destruction and exploitation
- The improvisational nature of Nazi policies and ideologies



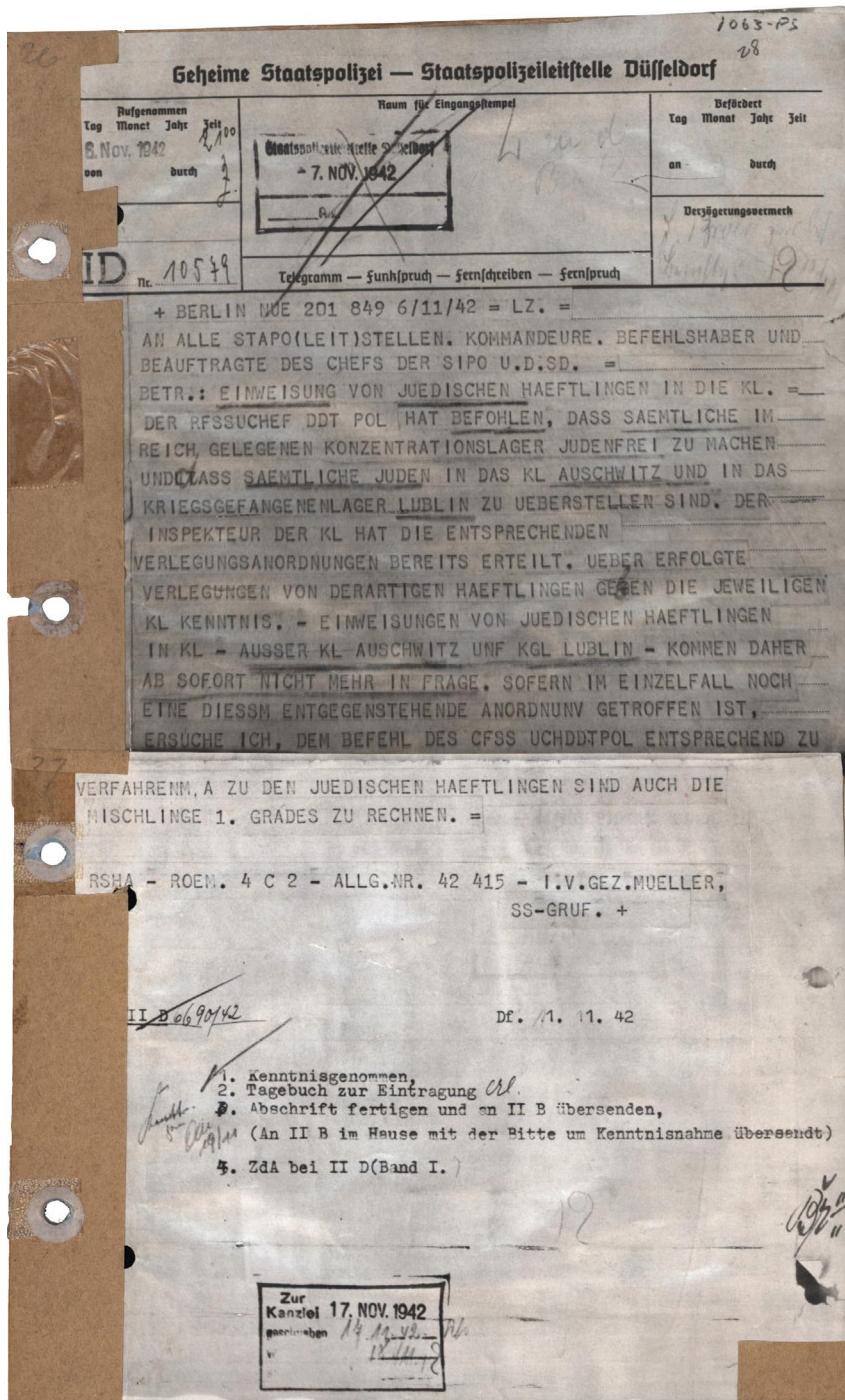
ROMANI FAMILIES GATHERED UNDER GUARD IN AN OPEN AREA OF THE CONCENTRATION CAMP AT BEŁŻEC IN 1940.

German authorities established several labor camps in southeast Poland near the small town of Bełżec on the western bank of the Bug River in 1940, when the Bug served as the demarcation line between the Nazi and Soviet spheres of occupied Poland. The labor camps were dismantled at the end of 1940, but SS authorities constructed a killing center on the site in November 1941 after the invasion of the Soviet Union and the escalation of Nazi genocidal practices. In many ways, the experience of the Roma under the Third Reich paralleled that of the Jews, as Nazi racial concepts deemed Roma “racially inferior” and characterized them as itinerant, wandering “Gypsies” that comprised a parasitic criminal underclass requiring concentration, segregation, and ultimately annihilation. The exact number of Roma murdered by the Third Reich and its allies is unknown but likely exceeds 220,000. After the war, the Roma continued to face discrimination, including great difficulties achieving recognition or compensation for their sufferings.

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Archiwum Dokumentacji Mechanicznej.

8 ORDER TO REMOVE JEWS FROM REICH TERRITORIES

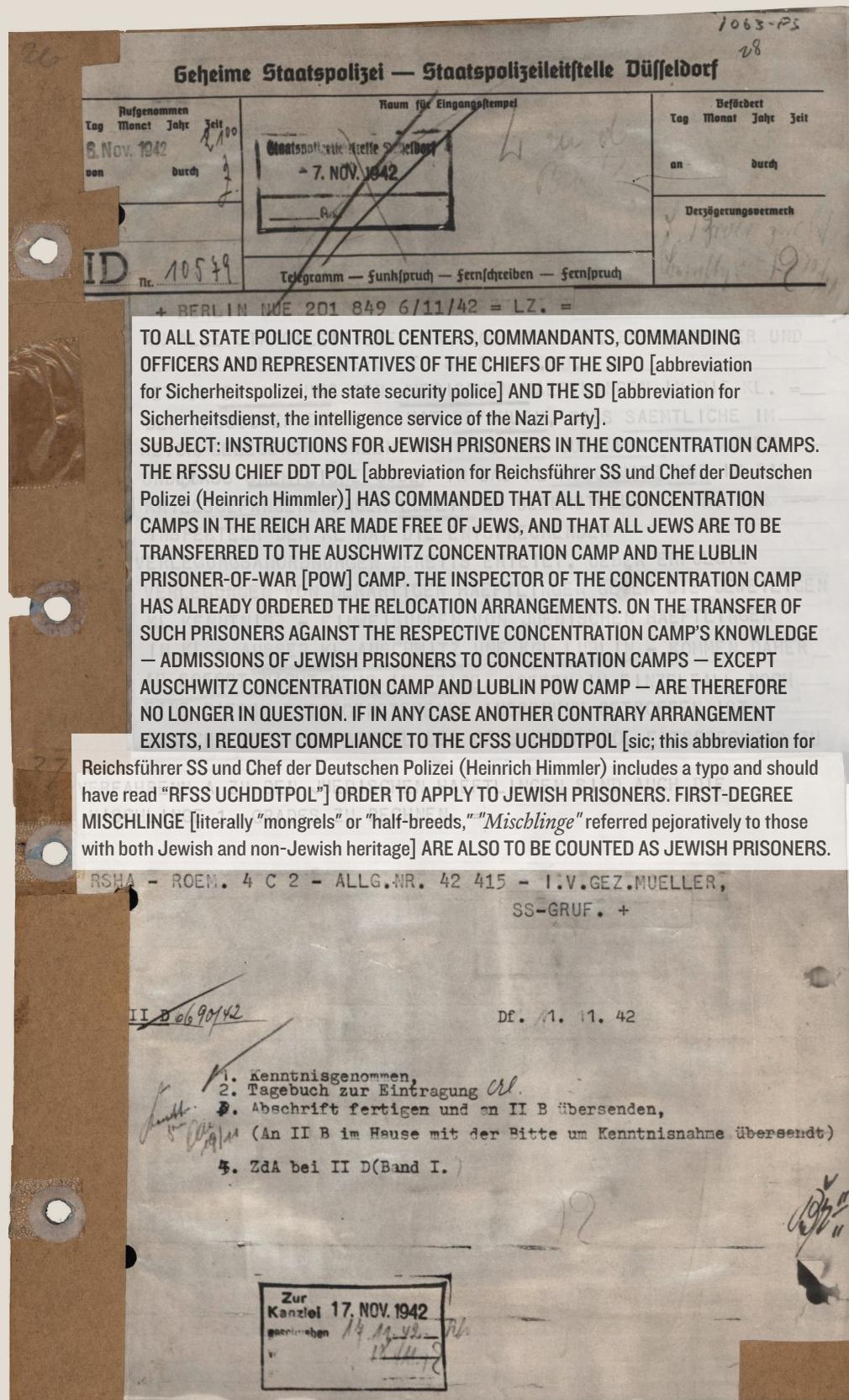
This telegram ordered the deportation of all Jews from concentration camps in greater Germany in November 1942. The anti-Jewish policies officially adopted by the Third Reich became incrementally more radical, especially in the context of the war. The regime committed itself to the complete destruction of Jewish life in Europe in the months after German forces invaded the Soviet Union in summer 1941. The complicated transfers of all Jewish camp inmates within the Reich to killing centers on occupied Polish territory required that camp authorities, police, and unknown numbers of railway workers become complicit in the processes of deportation and destruction.



Order to remove Jews from Reich territories, 1.1.0.6/82326804-5/ITS Digital Archive. Original held at the National Archives at College Park, MD.

ORDER TO REMOVE JEWS FROM REICH TERRITORIES

TRANSLATION



ORDER TO REMOVE JEWS FROM REICH TERRITORIES

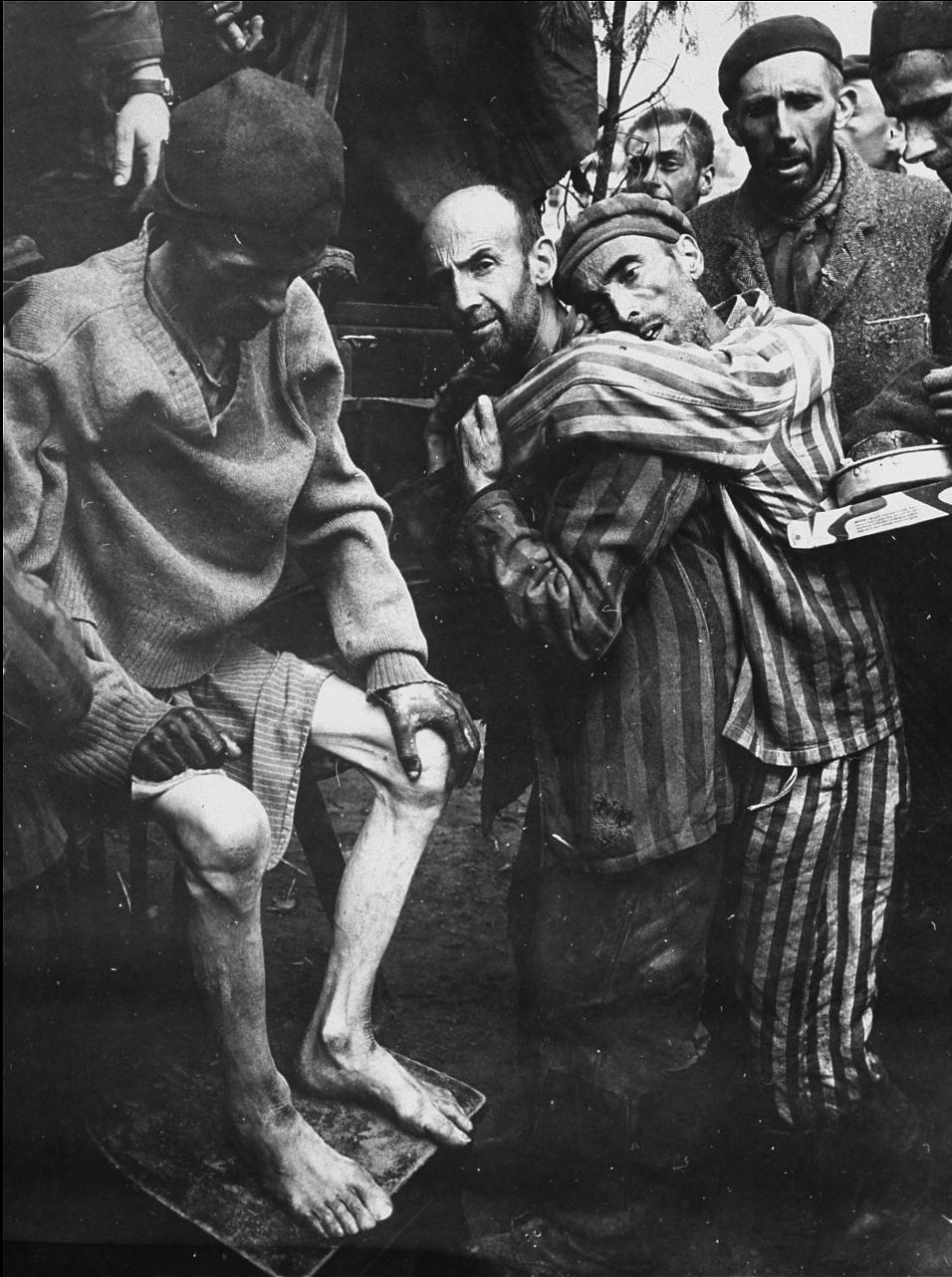
SUGGESTED APPROACHES TO THIS DOCUMENT

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

- Who were the intended recipients of this telegram, and why was this sent to them?
- To which locations were Jewish camp inmates to be transferred? Why might this have been so?
- Which police services were included in the list of recipients? What roles did police play in deportation actions? How did police become involved in the regime's crimes?
- How did Nazi anti-Jewish policies become incrementally more radical before and during the war?

FURTHER RESEARCH TOPICS RELATED TO THIS DOCUMENT:

- The development and radicalization of Nazi anti-Jewish policies
- Deportations of European Jews
- The relationship between policies of forced labor and mass murder
- The historical controversy surrounding the origins of the so-called *Endlösung* (literally, "Final Solution," which the Nazis used as a euphemism for the destruction of Jewish life in Europe)



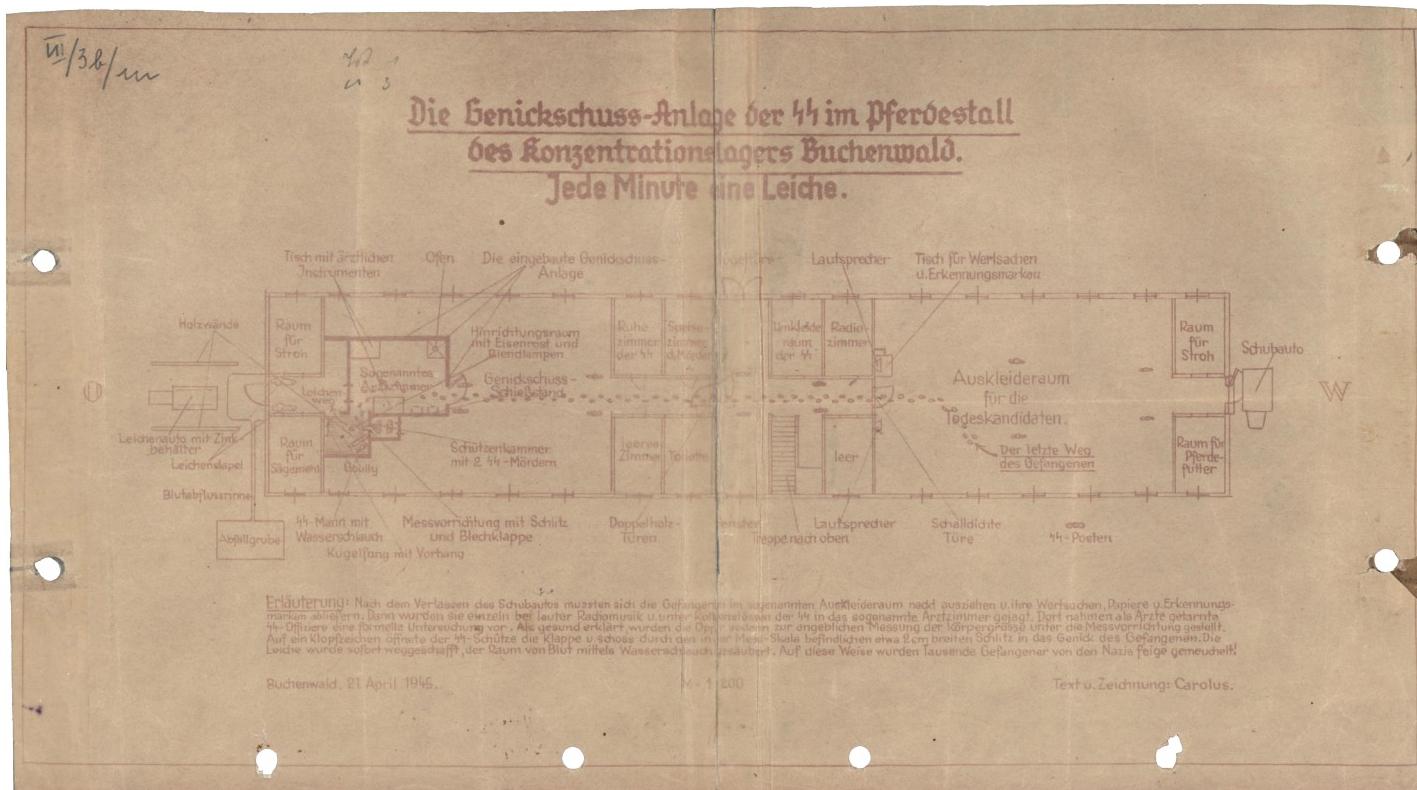
SURVIVORS FROM THE WÖBBELIN CONCENTRATION CAMP BEING EVACUATED

TO AN AMERICAN FIELD HOSPITAL ON MAY 4, 1945. This camp near the city of Ludwigslust had been established in February 1945 as a subcamp of Neuengamme to accommodate inmates marched under brutal conditions from other camps threatened by the advancing armies of the Allies. The Wöbbelin camp was only in operation for approximately three months, but its inmates suffered horrible conditions. When American forces liberated the camp on May 2, 1945, they found approximately 5,000 dead and dying prisoners, some of whom had been forced to resort to cannibalism in order to survive. US Army officials ordered German citizens of the nearby city of Ludwigslust to visit the camp and assist in the burial of the dead victims. Although many inmates of the camp had been forced to work in the surrounding areas, many locals denied all knowledge of this practice and of the camp itself.

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Arnold Bauer Barach.

MAP OF MASS EXECUTION FACILITY AT BUCHENWALD

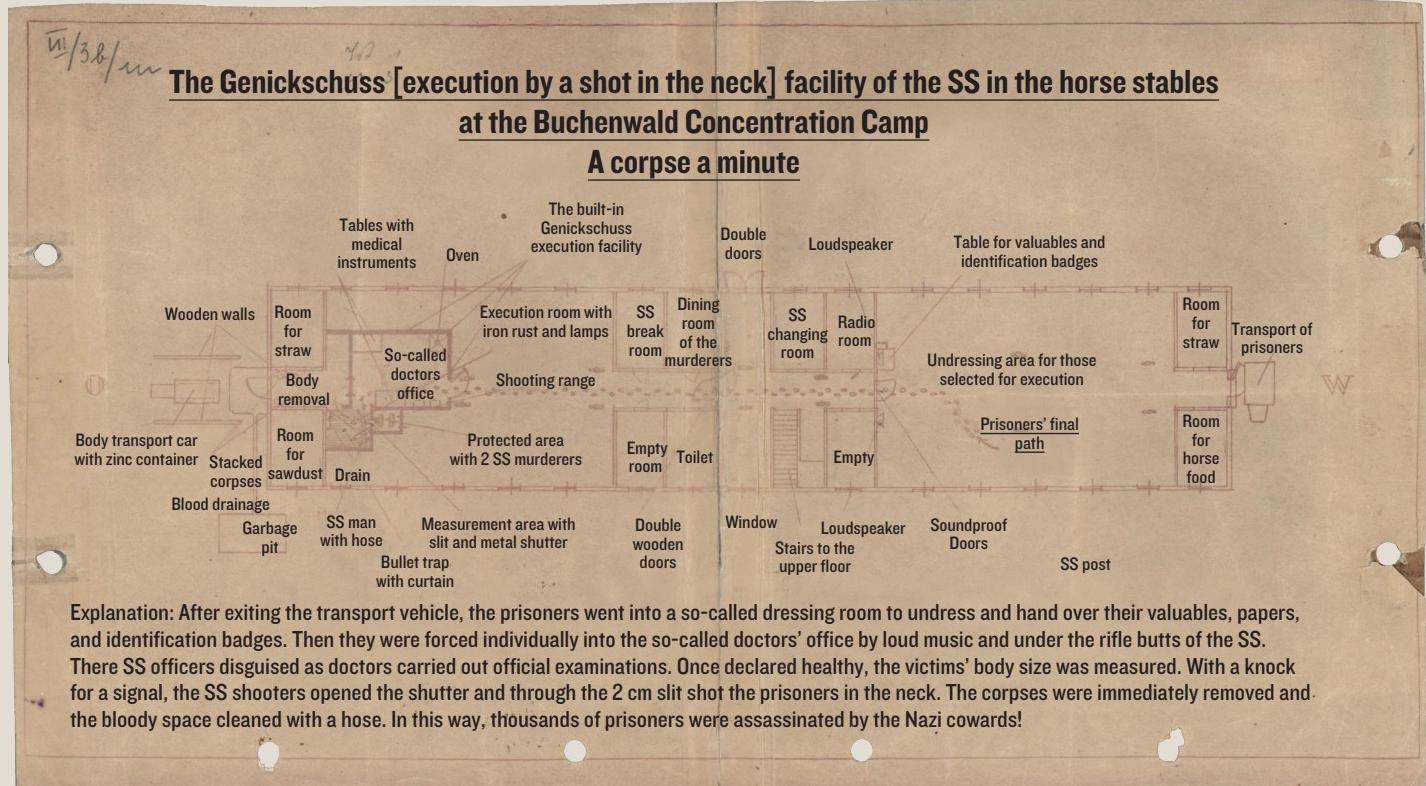
Signed only "Carolus," this map was hand-drawn in late April 1945 by a survivor of Buchenwald in order to illustrate the killing facilities in the camp's converted horse stables. Although Buchenwald primarily functioned as a detention and concentration site and not a killing center like Majdanek or Bełżec, many concentration camps in the Nazi network also contained such industrialized killing operations. This map was drawn a mere ten days after American troops liberated Buchenwald.



Map of execution facility at Buchenwald, 1.1.5.0/82066293/ITS Digital Archive. Original held at the National Archives at College Park, MD.

MAP OF MASS EXECUTION FACILITY AT BUCHENWALD

TRANSLATION



MAP OF MASS EXECUTION FACILITY AT BUCHENWALD

SUGGESTED APPROACHES TO THIS DOCUMENT

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

- How did camp authorities use deception and illusion to facilitate mass killing?
- Does this document suggest any evidence that the perpetrators attempted to make the site of mass killings more comfortable for themselves?
- What does this document indicate about the connections between Nazi practices of destruction and systematic theft?
- What does this map show about the planning and processes of killing?

FURTHER RESEARCH TOPICS RELATED TO THIS DOCUMENT:

- Buchenwald and other prewar Nazi concentration camps
- Nazi practices of mass killing and genocide
- Nazi anti-Jewish persecution and the origins of the so-called *Endlösung* (Final Solution)
- Practices of deception and systematic theft within the context of industrialized killing



SMOKE FROM A PYRE OF BURNING CORPSES RISING OVER MAJDANEK AS SEEN FROM THE NEARBY VILLAGE OF DZIESIĄTA IN OCTOBER 1943. Photographs like this reveal how the Nazi camp system and its genocidal practices were never fully removed from the outside civilian world. Construction of the camp at Majdanek was first begun when German authorities brought 2,000 Soviet prisoners-of-war to the site in October 1941. The camp was first established to provide the Third Reich with a central reservoir of forced laborers for future construction projects needed for projected German settlements in the occupied territories of Poland and the Soviet Union. As genocidal policies developed in 1941, however, the camp became increasingly reoriented toward mass killing operations. The SS constructed gas chambers at Majdanek in October 1942 in order to execute large numbers of mostly Jewish inmates deemed incapable of performing further hard labor. As Soviet forces approached the camp in late July 1944, the German camp authorities fled before they had a chance to destroy evidence of their mass killing operations. Between 95,000 and 130,000 people were killed at Majdanek in less than three years.

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku.

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ABOUT THE PARTNERS

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is America's national institution for the documentation, study, and interpretation of Holocaust history, and serves as its memorial to the millions of people killed during the Holocaust. The Holocaust was the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims—six million were murdered; Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), people with mental and physical disabilities, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons. Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi Germany. A living memorial to the Holocaust, the Museum strives to inspire leaders and citizens to confront hatred, prevent genocide, and promote human dignity. Its primary mission is to advance and disseminate knowledge about this unprecedented tragedy, to preserve the memory of those who suffered, and to encourage all people to reflect upon the moral and spiritual questions raised by the events of the Holocaust as well as their own responsibilities as citizens of a democracy.

For more information, visit ushmm.org.

The International Tracing Service (ITS) is a center for documenting National Socialist persecution and the liberated survivors. Former victims of Nazism and their families receive information regarding their incarceration, forced labor, and if available, postwar Allied assistance. The archives provide the foundation for ITS research and education, which are enhanced through collaboration with other international memorials, archives, and research institutions. The ITS commemorates and memorializes the victims of the Holocaust and other Nazi crimes. As of 2013 the original documents in the ITS archives are included on the UNESCO "Memory of the World" Registry.

For more information, visit its-arolsen.org.

The Wiener Library is one of the world's leading and most extensive archives on the Holocaust and Nazi era. Formed in 1933, the Library's unique collection of over one million items includes published and unpublished works, press cuttings, photographs and eyewitness testimony. Our mission is to serve scholars, professional researchers, the media and the public as a library of record. We aim to be a living memorial to the evils of the past by ensuring that our wealth of materials is put at the service of the future, and we seek to engage people of all ages and backgrounds in understanding the Holocaust and its historical context through an active educational programme. Finally, we strive to communicate the accessibility, power and contemporary relevance of our collections as a national resource for those wishing to prevent possible future genocides.

For more information, visit wienerlibrary.co.uk.

